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CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN ON THE FALL OF AFRICA • HARRY LEVIN ON ROBERT FITZGERALD

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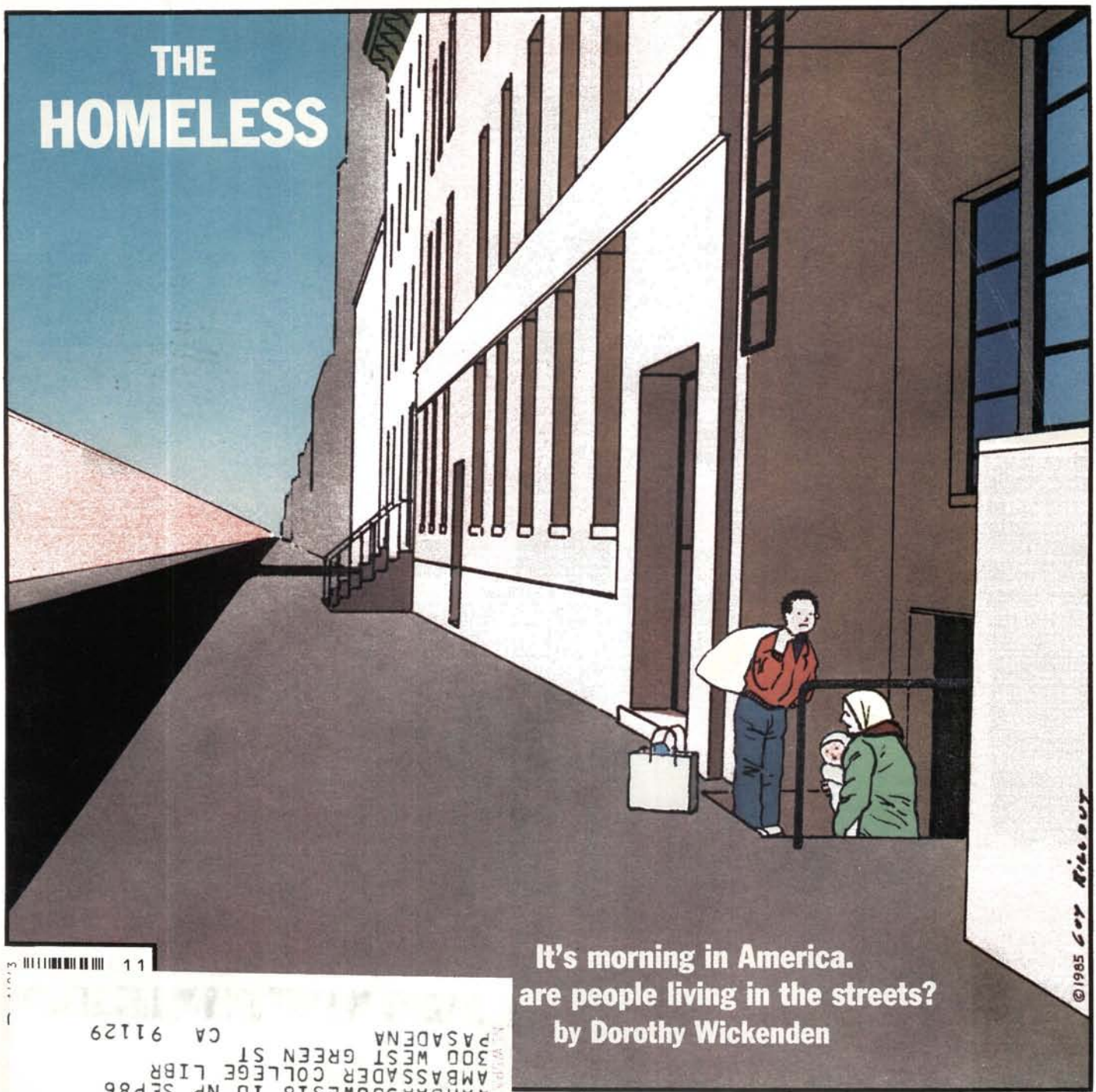

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JUNG AT HEART

To the editors:

George L. Mosse's extensive and thoughtful review of my book ("Treating with the Devil," TNR, January 28), *Psychotherapy in the Third Reich*, contains some misleading criticisms. First of all, Mosse claims that I do not note the degree to which psychoanalytic theory "encouraged adjustment to the existing social order as a part of mental health." But a significant part of my discussion of the various psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic schools of thought has to do with the "therapeutic turn" taken by the neo-Freudians after the First World War, which did just that. Mosse also claims I "refuse" to analyze "absurd ideas," but his rather clumsy burlesque of my discussion of Schultz (not Schultz-Hencke) shows a lack of appreciation of my chapter on the psychotherapist's pre-1933 ideals.

As for Jung, I do not *restrict* his motives to the desire to protect psychotherapy in Germany. My intent was simply to add this motive to his well-known and much debated thoughts and words about Aryans and Jews, which I, in any case, say "reveal a destructive ambivalence and prejudice that may have served Nazi persecution of the Jews."

Most seriously, Mosse imputes to my book, and to me, a view that I neither hold nor even inadvertently express. Mosse asserts that I am a "functionalist," that is, one who emphasizes "the limits set upon Hitler's powers" and that, as a result, my analysis of the setting for the history of the Göring Institute is "seriously flawed." I am in fact an "intentionalist," convinced that Hitler from early on in his life and career wished the physical destruction of the Jews and that sometime in 1941 he ordered Himmler to get on with it. To utilize the research of "functionalist" historians such as Broszat and Schleunes on the tangled workings of the Nazi state is *not*, for me at least, to draw the conclusion that on certain crucial matters (war, extermination) the Nazis were not dreadfully efficient and directed unequivocally by Hitler's desires. The notion that Nazi Germany was not a smoothly run totalitarian regime is in any case an early and accepted insight, regardless of the arguments of functionalists like Broszat that the extermination of the Jews resulted from bureaucratic inertia rather than irrational intent.

GEOFFREY COCKS
Albion, Michigan

NO CONNECTION

To the editors:

"The LaRouche Connection" (TNR, November 19) erroneously implies that there has been a LaRouche-SDI connection involving me, incorrectly states that I have had "extensive contact with the LaRouchians" and have been a member of the Fusion Energy Foundation, and omits my strong criticism of the LaRouchians for their attacks on Kissinger.

Although at one time I subscribed to *Fusion* magazine, I have never been a member of FEF; nor have I ever attended any meetings sponsored by the FEF (or any other LaRouchian organization).

My contact with the FEF was much less extensive than my contact with Soviet fusion scientists—which was itself very limited. In the mid to late seventies, the FEF contact was useful in tracking unconventional U.S. and Soviet fusion ideas. During the late seventies and early eighties, when the FEF began to promote beam weapons, attack Kissinger, and promote LaRouche politically, I increasingly distanced myself from the contact.

JOHN H. NUCKOLLS
Associate Director for Physics
Lawrence Livermore Laboratory
Livermore, California

Messrs. King and Radosh reply:

In phone conversations Dr. Nuckolls described to us a range of contacts with the LaRouchians that were "extensive" by any reasonable standard. We could not quote any "strong" criticism of the LaRouchians by Dr. Nuckolls since he did not make any such critisism and, indeed, explicitly told us that he didn't wish to either attack or defend them.

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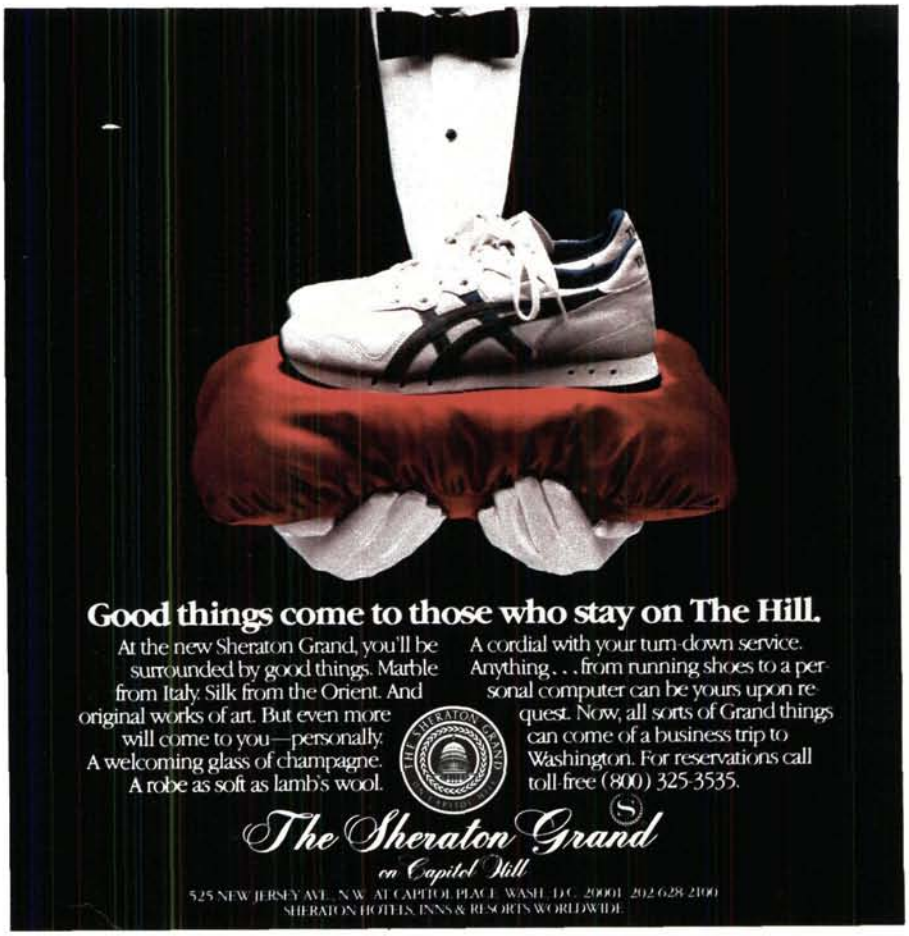
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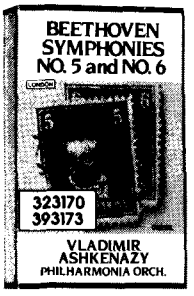

319434. Bach: Sonatas for Viola De Gamba & Harpsichord—Yo-Yo Ma, cello; Ken. Cooper, harpsichord *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

328054. Bach's Tops—*Gavotte; Sleepers Awake;* more. Kapp, Philharmonia Virtuosi of New York (CBS)

329714. Bartok: Concerto for Orchestra; Dance Suite—Solti conducts Chicago Sym. *(Digital*—London)

273409. Beethoven: 3 Piano Sonatas—Moonlight, Appassionata, Pathetique. Horowitz, piano (Columbia)

252874. Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 (Chorale)—Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orch. (Columbia)

325654-395657. Beethoven Piano Concertos Nos. 1 & 5 (Emperor)—Brendel, piano (Counts as 2—Vox)

325274. Berg: Lulu Suite—also Schoenberg, Webern. Ormandy, Phila. Orch. (Masterworks Portrait)

324780. Bolling: Suite For Cello and Jazz Piano—Yo-Yo Ma, Bolling (CBS)

263293. Bolling: Suite For Flute and Jazz Piano—Rampal, Bolling (Columbia)

330118. Brahms: String Quintets in F and G Major—Boston Sym. Chamber Players *(Digital*—Nonesuch)

328039. Brahms: Symphony No. 3; Haydn Variations—Mehta, New York Phil. (CBS Masterworks)

246843. Chopin: Mazurkas, Etudes, etc.—Vladimir Horowitz, piano (Columbia)

326439. Copland: Rodeo; Dance Symphony; El Salon Mexico; Fanfare for Common Man—Dorati, Detroit Sym. *(Digital*—London)

322826. Debussy: La Mer; Nocturnes—Michael Tilson Thomas, Philharmonia Orch. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

328401. Debussy: Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp; Syrinx for Solo Flute—plus works by Ravel, Faure, etc. Orpheus Trio *(Digital*—Vanguard Audiophile)

321471. Gershwin: Piano Concerto in F; American in Paris; Rhapsody in Blue—Andre Previn and the London Symphony (Angel)

319004. Glass, Philip: The Photographer (CBS)

228684. Grieg: Peer Gynt Suites 1 and 2; Bizet: Carmen Suites—Leonard Bernstein and the New York Phil. (Columbia)

323543. Handel: Royal Fireworks Music; Oboe Concertos 1-3—Karl Munchinger, Stuttgart Chamber Orch. *(Digital*—London)

329615. Handel: Water Music: Malgorie, La Grande Ecurie & la Chambre duRoy *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

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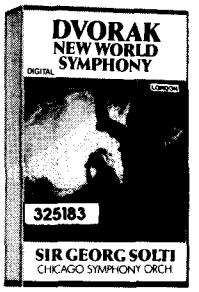

326561. Haydn: 3 Favorite Concertos—Cello in D (Yo-Yo Ma); Violin in C (Cho-Liang Lin); Trumpet in E Flat (Wynton Marsalis) (CBS Masterworks)

326272. Holst: The Planets—Bernstein, New York Phil. (CBS Great Performances)

330126. Kodaly: Hary Janos Suite; Altven: Swedish Rhapsody—Comissiona, Baltimore Symphony *(Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

321208. Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies 2,3,5; Mephisto Waltz—Willi Boskovksy, London Phil. (Angel)

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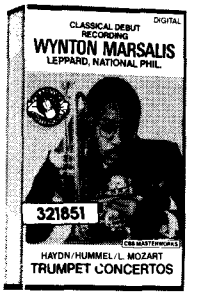
305730. Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 (Italian); **Overtures**—Andre Previn, London Symphony (Angel)

294264. Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 21 (Elvira Madigan) and **No. 17**—Ashkenazy plays, conducts Philharmonia Or. (London)



325365. Mozart: Eine Kleine Nachtmusik; Symph. No. 40—Casals, Marlboro Festival Orch. (CBS Portrait)

326975. Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 4; Adagio; Rondos—Zukerman plays, conducts St. Paul Chamber Orch. (CBS Masterworks)

309492. Mussorgsky: Pictures At An Exhibition; Night On Bald Mountain—Bernstein, New York Phil. (CBS Great Performances)

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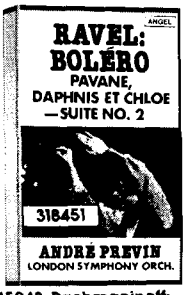

245043. Rachmaninoff: Piano Concertos Nos. 1 & 2—Ashkenazy; Previn, London Sym. (London)

324533. Respighi: Feste Romane; Pines & Fountains Of Rome—Dutoit, Orch. de Montreal *(Digital*—London)

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329169. Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4—Lorin Maazel, Cleveland Orch. (CBS Masterworks)

231563. Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake and **Sleeping Beauty Ballet Suites**—Ormandy, Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia)

321844-391847. Verdi: La Traviata—Original Motion Picture Soundtrack. Stars Domingo, Stratas (Counts as 2—Elektra)

326447. Verdi: Overtures—*La Forza del Destino, I Vespri Siciliana, Nabucco,* etc. Chailly, National Philharmonic *(Digital*—London)

324525. An Isaac Stern Vivaldi Gala: Concertos For 2 and 3 Violins; etc. Stern, Zukerman, Perlman, others (CBS Masterworks)

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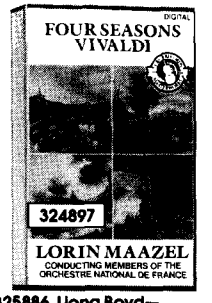
310086. Wagner: Overtures—*Flying Dutchman; Rienzi;* etc. Maazel, Philharmonia Orch. (Columbia)



325886. Liona Boyd—Live in Tokyo. Works by Dowland, Soler, Falla, etc. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

292003-392001. Curtain Raisers—World's Favorite Overtures. *Die Fledermaus; Carmen, William Tell;* etc. (Counts as 2—Columbia)

328856. Placido Domingo—Always In My Heart. Spanish songs by Lecuona: *Malaguena,* more (CBS)

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FROM WASHINGTON

LOAN RANGERS

Education Secretary William Bennett says that if his son would like $50,000 to start a business, rather than spend it going to Harvard, that's O.K. with him. The question is, What business? I suggest a bank specializing in student loans. Under current arrangements, the government not only guarantees the loans but also guarantees the banks an interest rate at least three and a half percent higher than they can get lending to the government itself. This is a deal Harvard can't match.

The Reagan administration regularly proposes reforms in student aid, and regularly backs down in the face of protests that are louder than anything ever heard in defense of welfare or food stamps. As the rules were rather thoughtlessly amended during the late 1970s, *anyone* can now get an interest-free loan of $2,500 a year while in college and a subsidized interest rate during repayment after graduation. That deal is worth $6,000 to a $100,000-a-year family with two kids in college. Many wealthy families are said to borrow the money and invest it in government bonds, thus completing the cycle. Why not?

Of course it's wrong to judge any social policy on the basis of horror stories. But President Reagan's latest proposed cutbacks in student aid deserve to be measured against the reasons we tax some people in order to help pay for other people to go to college. There are two justifications for government student aid. One is to assure all citizens an equal opportunity to advance themselves through education. The other is that each individual's education also benefits society as a whole.

Besides a narrowing of the bankers' profit margin and other long-overdue administrative reforms, Reagan would institute two major changes. Students from families making over $32,500 a year would not be eligible for government grants, bargain loans, or subsidized jobs. (The cutoff for grants would be $25,000, which is about the median family income.) Second, no one would be able to get subsidized loans, jobs, or grants worth more than $4,000 a year.

Attending the average state college or university costs about $5,000 a year, including tuition, books, room and board. No state school costs more than $8,000. By contrast, 92 percent of private colleges cost more than $8,000. Reagan's proposed ceilings, then, will have little effect on students at state schools, and certainly shouldn't deny anyone the opportunity to attend one. The bite will be felt at private institutions. This is an explicit policy decision. Bennett and others in the administration have said frankly that they see the goal of student aid as guaranteeing everybody the chance at a good college education, not guaranteeing all students the most expensive education they care to buy.

Critics have charged the administration with hypocrisy on this point. Reagan and Bennett are both ardent advocates of "choice" at the primary and secondary levels. They want the government to help parents pay for private schools through voucher systems and tuition tax credits. Yet at the college level, they feel the guarantee of a public education is good enough. Bennett denies any contradiction. Unlike students at private colleges, private primary and secondary students now get no help at all, "so we're trying to achieve . . . parity." But this is disingenuous. The goal of voucher systems is to give parents an absolutely free choice between public and private schooling. Tuition tax credits actually would help *only* private schools.

But Bennett's liberal critics are equally contradictory. While anathematizing vouchers as a threat to the public schools, they insist that financial constraints should never prevent anyone from attending a private university. It's true that public schools are part of the democratic vision in a way that public universities are not. Ideally, they are the place where people of all classes, races, and abilities start out life together, wherever they might end up. Even public universities are part of the meritocratic sorting-out process. On the other hand, public universities are not going through the crisis many public schools are. Denying would-be college students an alternative does not seem

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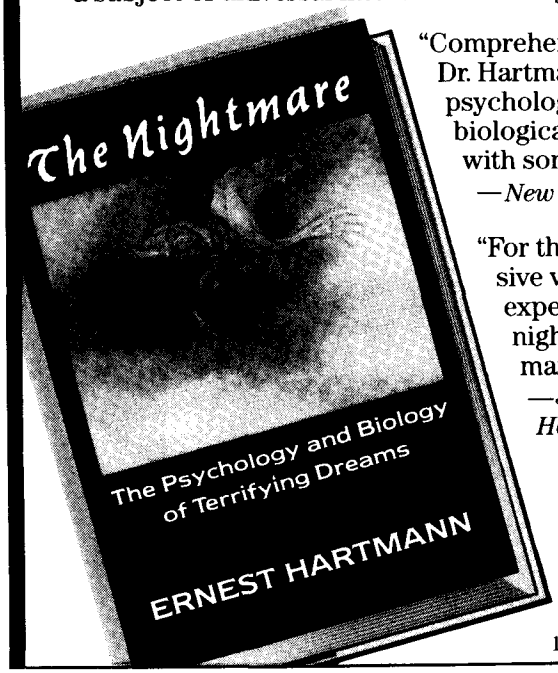

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — MARCH 18, 1985

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THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 192, Number 11, Issue 3,661, March 18, 1985. (Printed on February 27, 1985.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 7 & 14, July 15 & 22, Aug. 12 & 19, and Sept. 16 & 23, 1985) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $48; foreign, $73; Canada, $60. Back issues, $2.50 (includes postage & handling).

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(ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. **Subscribers:** Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to **Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 955, Farmingdale, NY 11737-0001.** For subscription problems call **800-645-9559** (In N.Y. State call 800-732-9119).

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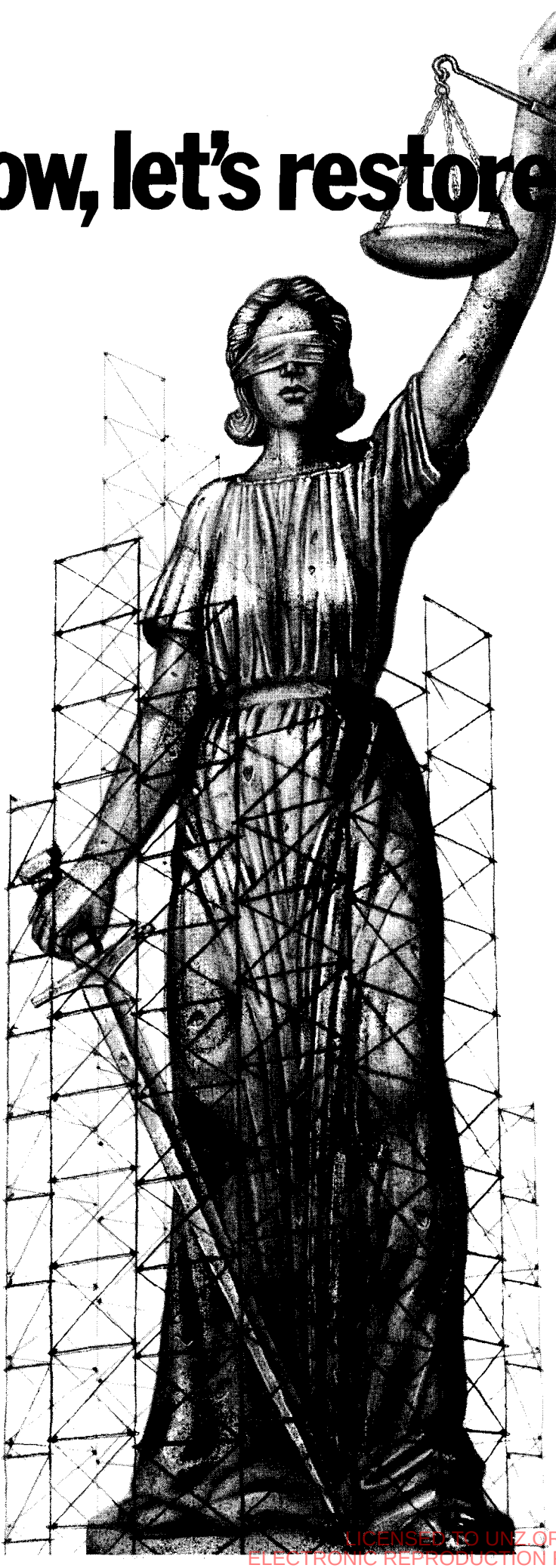

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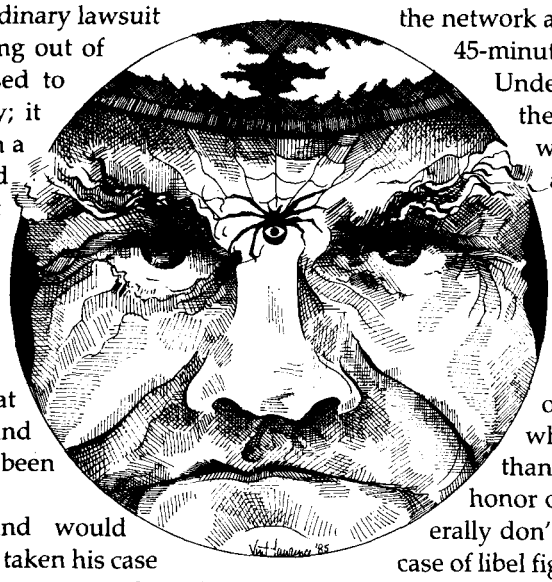
THE NEW REPUBLIC
MARCH 18, 1985

WESTY PULLS OUT

After two and a half years, eight million dollars in legal costs, and a parade of witnesses straight out of *The Best and the Brightest*, General William Westmoreland and CBS finally decided to end their extraordinary lawsuit in a most ordinary way—by settling out of court. The libel case was supposed to have been the trial of the century; it was portrayed in the media as both a major battle over press freedom and an occasion for passing judgment on the Vietnam War. As it turned out, *Westmoreland* vs. *CBS* was the anticlimax of the century. It revealed little about either the irresponsibility of the press or the conduct of the war. We don't see that anything was achieved by this grand spectacle that couldn't have been achieved without it.



Certainly General Westmoreland would have been better off if he had never taken his case to court. Indeed, to some extent he seems to have been dragged into the whole affair by his attorney, Dan Burt, a conservative activist who had a point to make about the liberal media's biases, but who lacked the legal skill, the experience, and most important, the evidence to prove it in court. Westmoreland had plenty of ways to restore his reputation short of filing suit. In the months just after CBS's 1982 documentary, "The Uncounted Enemy," which charged him with conspiring to falsify estimates of enemy troop strength, the network responded to the general's complaints by offering him 15 minutes of free air time for a rebuttal. He refused, insisting that the network also publish an apology, broadcast a 45-minute retraction, and pay him damages. Understandably, CBS said no. But even then, Westmoreland could have waged a media campaign of his own against the broadcast—perhaps funded by some of the same conservatives who later paid for his lawsuit.

Instead, encouraged by Burt, Westmoreland insisted on taking his case out of the court of public opinion and into a court of law—where he vowed to do nothing less than "clear my name, my honor, and the honor of the military." But the courts generally don't address such lofty matters. In the case of libel fights, they limit themselves to deciding whether an allegedly defamatory report was made in "reckless disregard of the truth." By bringing the suit, Westmoreland transformed the terms of his dispute with CBS. The question had initially been whether CBS twisted the facts about the general's conduct in Vietnam—whether the network had been biased or unfair. The minute Westmoreland sued for libel, it became the much narrower issue of whether the network had shown "reckless disregard." From the start, the odds were against proving this.

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(Things became even more difficult in the last week of the trial, when Judge Pierre Leval informed Burt that he would have to show "clear and convincing" evidence of the broadcast's falsity and the network's reckless disregard, not simply the usual "preponderance of the evidence.") And when CBS's two key sources for its documentary repeated their stories under oath, Westy's case fell apart. Despite his game insistence that CBS's acknowledgment of his patriotism and loyalty was the apology he had sought all along, the general appeared slightly foolish.

BECAUSE it was Westmoreland's lawyer who asked that the case be settled, the impression will linger in the public mind that CBS has been "vindicated." With respect to the essential accuracy of the network's documentary, this is true enough. But CBS hardly has cause to celebrate. The network helped bring on this unnecessary trial in two ways. First, "The Uncounted Enemy" was both simplistic and sensational. In his determination to make the case against Westmoreland, the show's producer, George Crile, failed to interview a key military intelligence officer who later backed Westmoreland, and he showed another officer tapes of witnesses criticizing Westmoreland—a violation of TV journalistic ethics.

Second, as Connie Bruck pointed out in *The American Lawyer* in September 1983, the network brass's first reaction to criticism of its show about Westmoreland was to plead mea culpa: it suspended Crile, put together an internal report that was even harsher than the show's critics, and made its generous offer of free air time to the general. The implication of all of this was to concede that the show had been unfair to Westmoreland. In fact, as the trial later revealed, there were credible witnesses to support the show's central point. If the program had been more thoughtful, and if the network had shown more confidence in its story, Burt and Westmoreland might not have felt emboldened to launch their lawsuit.

Reporters, and the First Amendment lawyers who defend them, worry that this trial will have a "chilling effect" upon journalists in the future. We're not so sure. The "chilling effect" argument holds that the threat of being sued for libel—that is, the prospect of having to pay to fight a libel suit—could deter reporters from taking on difficult and controversial stories. But the outcome of *Westmoreland* vs. *CBS* shows that a news organization with vast resources can usually grind down a libel plaintiff who has less money to spend. And if America's media giants feel chastened by the Westmoreland suit, and redouble their efforts to be accurate and objective as a result, so much the better. Of course, the "chilling effect" argument is usually raised on behalf of smaller news organizations, which have less money with which to defend themselves. These concerns are more justified. But the Westmoreland trial should actually ease some of the small publications' worries about libel. Westmoreland's defeat underlined the heavy price of bringing a dubious libel suit.

As for the question of why America lost in Vietnam—and of who is to blame for that defeat—the trial did provide an opportunity to get some of the major figures in the war to discuss their decisions under oath. Still, a courtroom is not the best place to argue the rights and wrongs of such a deeply ambiguous national experience. The most important thing the Westmoreland trial provided was a reminder—that the conduct of the war, as well as the public protest over its conduct, involved many deceptions. One of these deceptions, perhaps, was Westmoreland's decision to doctor the enemy troop estimates. But was that any more dishonest, or more fateful, than the Johnson administration's murky explanation of what happened in the Tonkin Gulf? Or the claim of some in the peace movement that the Vietcong and North Vietnam represented the forces of progress? What would anyone have thought of these questions if the jury had made a decision? The "verdict" on Vietnam will come from historians—and from politicians, in the decisions they make about America's role in future Third World conflicts.

DISINGENUOUS DEFENSE

We can't help noticing that the Pentagon's budget battle continues to produce some misleading and untenable arguments. Here are four recent examples.

"Defense spending has decreased as a percentage of GNP." True. Thirty years ago it stood at about nine percent, and as recently as 1967, defense spending was up to ten percent of GNP. Now it's 6.5 percent, up slightly from the Carter-era low of just over four percent in 1979. But in 1967 we were fighting a major land war in Vietnam, and as Nicholas Lemann pointed out in these pages recently ("Defense Budget Games," TNR, February 4), the GNP, adjusted for inflation, increased two and a half times between 1960 and 1981. The Pentagon isn't getting less overall; it's just getting a smaller portion of a much larger pie. And that makes sense. Why should a rising standard of living require more expenditures for arms? We should spend whatever it takes to meet our defense needs and no more.

"Defense funding is a smaller part of the federal budget than before." True again. In 1962, for example, more than 45 percent of the budget went to defense, compared to about 26 percent today. But what Weinberger & Co. neglect to point out is that a host of social programs—including Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and Social Security—were either created or vastly expanded in the interim. Former defense secretary James Schlesinger writes in *The Wall Street Journal* that "defense outlays . . . will wind up at 26 percent of the total—about the usual level." That's just another way of saying that defense spending is increasing in absolute terms—while implying that it has remained the same.

"Even Jimmy Carter wanted to spend more." Carter did

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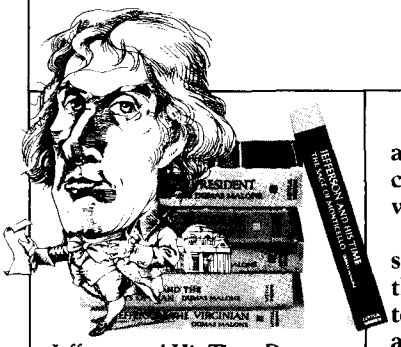

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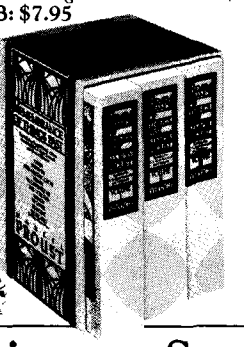

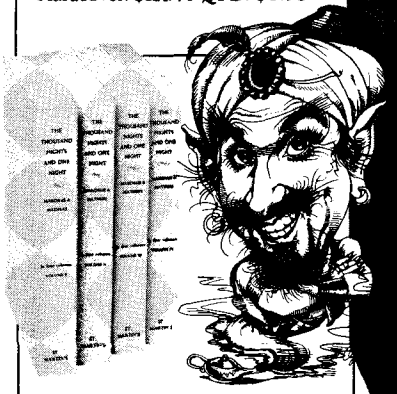

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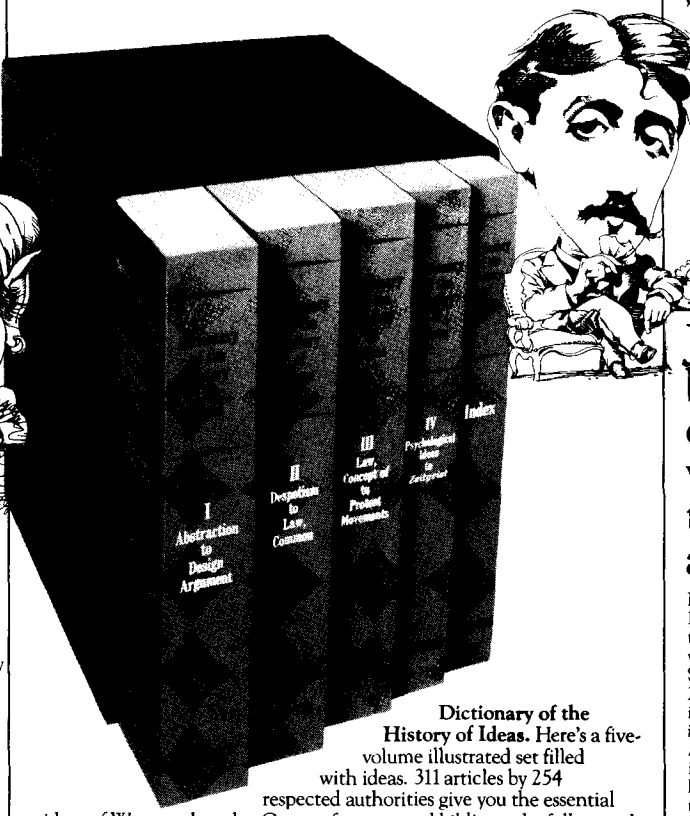

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submit a draft of a bloated military budget just five days before leaving office. But he was merely attempting to dispel his image as a sissy, not offering a serious plan for defense policy. When we compare the projections of an actual Carter budget (for fiscal year 1981) with the projections contained in Reagan's defense budget last year, we see that the Pentagon will spend $35 billion more in 1985 and $95 billion more in 1990 than Carter would have. If Weinberger gets his 13 percent budget increase this year, the disparity will be greater still.

"Our budget has already been cut drastically by the administration, and Congress hasn't even looked at it yet." This is perhaps the most shameless bit of misinformation. Here's how the trick works: Cap asks for $320 billion for next year, which includes exaggerated estimates for things like inflation and fuel costs and an extra few billion as precautionary padding. By the time the Office of Management and Budget gets through, $30 billion or so may have been sliced from Weinberger's initial internal request, allowing the secretary to tell the public he accepted a massive cut. But in fact, no one has cut anything to speak of: defense spending will still rise by 13 percent over last year. Meanwhile, other programs are subject to real cuts.

Here are some numbers that speak for themselves. In fiscal year 1967, defense outlays were $71.4 billion. By 1978, under Carter, they amounted to $104.5 billion, a decline in real dollars. Under Reagan's 1982 budget the Pentagon spent $185 billion. And in 1987, Weinberger wants about $321 billion. In other words, by fiscal year 1987, the defense budget will have increased roughly 60 percent in constant dollars since the height of the Vietnam War.

In any case, all of Cap's complaints only confirm that the biggest problem at the Pentagon is poor management. He claims we are still far behind the Soviets in ICBMs, readiness, and conventional forces in the Europe. But he claimed when he took office in 1981 that more money would reduce our vulnerability. Now—several hundred billion dollars later—he says we're almost as vulnerable as ever. This running in place will hardly convince Congress to approve a massive new infusion of funds. The Pentagon has demonstrated unquestionable skill at spending money. If it could prove it can manage what it is given, there might not be such a fuss over the defense budget.

NOTEBOOK

□ GRACE NOTE: Our friend Steven Kelman, a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, has published in the winter issue of *The Public Interest* a devastating critique of the Grace Commission report on government waste. Taking ten examples of "waste" featured in a Grace press release, Kelman shows that they are all tremendously exaggerated. But we must enter a partial demurral. We bow to no one in our skepticism that billions can be saved by eliminating "waste," and in our distaste for the self-righteous public posturing of Peter Grace. But there is a flavor in Kelman's essay of *tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*. For example, he explains that Veterans Administration nursing homes cost more per room than private nursing homes because of the Davis-Bacon Act, which requires "prevailing" (i.e., union) wage rates on federal construction, and because of special preferences for minority and small-business contractors, and so on. Yes, of course, this isn't "waste." But it isn't "policy" either, in the sense that excessive government pensions and other things the Grace Commission mislabels as waste are costs the government has consciously decided to absorb. Similarly, Kelman reports that the notorious $91 Pentagon screw (available at the hardware store for three cents) can be explained by procedures that allow contractors to spread their overhead costs evenly across all spare parts. But what private company would do business this way? As Kelman concludes, "We need desperately to foster within government the sense that public managers *are* indeed managers." To give the Grace Commission its due, it has focused attention on many government practices that are unmanagerial, to say the least.

□ ANOTHER GRACE NOTE: Peter Grace already has issued his own rebuttal of sorts to Kelman's critique. Last November 13, on a radio talk show in Denver, Grace was asked what he thought of a *Washington Post* Op-Ed piece by Kelman, in which Kelman made many of the

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same criticisms that have recently appeared in *The Public Interest*. According to Roy Fox, the show's host, Grace angrily replied that Kelman should be ignored because he is closely associated with Ohio senator Howard Metzenbaum, and is "one of the founders of SDS." Well! It's true that Kelman is married to Metzenbaum's daughter—although it's hard to see what that has to do with anything, since Metzenbaum himself is a rather fierce scourge of government waste. The charge about SDS is simply hilarious. Far from being a bomb-thrower, Kelman was the most outspoken undergraduate opponent of Students for a Democratic Society at Harvard in the late 1960s. He published a prescient and widely loathed book called *Push Comes to Shove*, which attacked SDS at length. SDS even threatened to disrupt Harvard's 1970 graduation ceremonies when Kelman was chosen as a speaker. We are pleased to hear that Grace has apologized to Kelman.

□ AMTRAK, fighting the Reagan administration's proposal to end its operating subsidy of about $35 per rider, asserts that airlines enjoy a subsidy of $33 per rider through the tax deduction of business travel. This ridiculous argument has been picked up by Amtrak's supporters, such as Tom Wicker of *The New York Times*. No publication in America has been more obsessive about the abuse of business tax deductions than TNR, but even we recognize that the deduction of legitimate business expenses is not a "subsidy." The income tax is on net profits, not on gross revenues. It is not a "subsidy" to allow auto companies to deduct the cost of buying steel, and it is not a "subsidy" to allow deductions for necessary business travel. If this is the best case Amtrak can make, it's pretty pathetic.

□ GEORGE WILL has been slumming it again. You remember last summer when Will attended his very first rock concert, and then informed the world that working-class rock hero Bruce Springsteen was actually a macho, morning-in-America-type guy who would be right at home chopping wood at the Reagan ranch. Will got hooted back to his country club by Springsteen and his fans for that one. Now he has turned his attention to the rabble once more by devoting a column to praising Elmore Leonard, the crime novelist who writes about tough guys in Miami and Detroit. In the confines of 750 words, Will found room for references to Bloomsbury, Van Gogh, T.S. Eliot, and—of course—Trollope. Keep your eye out for Will's *pensées* about Eddie Murphy.

□ FIFTEEN YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "No one knows how many of the estimated 25,000 Jews who lived in Poland up to 1967 have since left for the West in the backwash of the Six Day War, which inspired Communist accusations that the Jews were potential 'Fifth Columnists.' Probably far fewer than 10,000 remain, if we credit government figures, the reports of Jewish agencies and Western observers, out of a total Polish population of 32.5 million. Last September, the reported dead-

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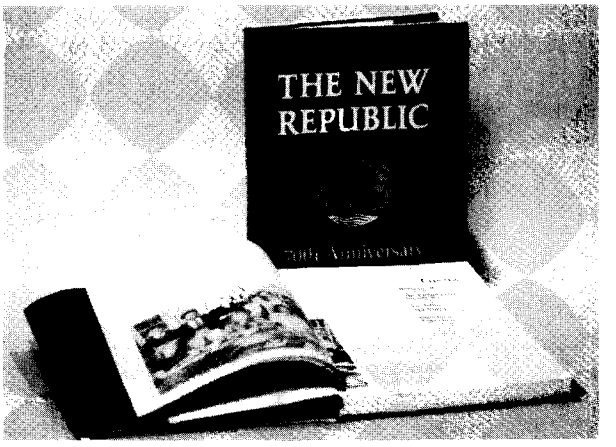

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line for issuing exit permits (not yet enforced), the Jewish community began to shrink even faster. Pouring out of Warsaw on the 'Chopin Express,' a thousand refugees a month have headed for Vienna, according to the American Joint Distribution Committee. Before the year's end, only the old and infirm may be left as representatives of what was once Europe's richest Jewish culture." ("Reluctant Emigrés" by Margaret Reynolds, March 21, 1970.)

Bishop O'Connor flogs his flock.

JOHN PAUL'S DISCIPLE

To: His Holiness, John Paul II
From: Monsignor 007, Secretariat of State, Vatican Curia
Re: His Eminence John J. O'Connor

Your Holiness:
As per your most holy instruction, this office has conducted a one-year review of Archbishop O'Connor's performance as the spiritual leader of the New York archdiocese. The archbishop has had an extremely busy first year. He has granted more interviews than his predecessor, Terrence Cardinal Cooke, granted in his entire 15-year tenure. And he has stirred considerable controversy. Because New York is the media and cultural center of the United States, a vocal archbishop can have an impact far beyond his own see. Through proper management of the press, he can be seen as a de facto spokesman for the American Church—even though some of his views may be in the minority among his brethren in the hierarchy. Already O'Connor has proven to be a faithful disciple of yours here in America, where the laity and the hierarchy have both shown disturbing affinity for so-called "progressive thinking." He shows every sign of fulfilling your hopes of bringing the American Church back in line.

Here are some of the key moments of O'Connor's first year:

March: His installation ceremony was attended by virtually every important New York politician as well as many national figures. O'Connor used the occasion to denounce abortion, vowing to raise the stakes in the battle to outlaw it.

April: In manner reminiscent of Your Holiness, O'Connor took a highly visible, six-week whirlwind tour of his new diocese. Upon realizing that many of his new flock spoke Spanish, he undertook a crash course in the language. This was duly reported in *The New York Times*.

May: O'Connor began a running dispute with New York mayor Ed Koch over Executive Order 50, which bans discrimination against homosexuals by agencies receiving city funds. O'Connor's commendable position is that the city has no right to dictate hiring practices to the Catholic agencies he heads.

June: During a televised press conference, O'Connor made his now famous statement: "I cannot understand how a Catholic in good conscience can vote for a candidate who explicitly supports abortion." With this act, he single-handedly thrust the Catholic Church into the American election campaign.

August: After New York governor Mario Cuomo, a Catholic himself, complained to a *New York Times* reporter that O'Connor was trying to dictate the Catholic vote, O'Connor called in reporters to tell them that that was not the case. There were unfortunate questions about Catholic politicians being excommunicated. Wisely, O'Connor ducked all such questions.

September: O'Connor became further involved in the American election when he chided Democratic vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro, another Catholic politician, for her views on abortion. "[She] has said some things about abortion . . . which are not true," he told the press. We have heard a number of unconfirmed reports that other bishops in the American hierarchy were dismayed at O'Connor's remarks, feeling that he was becoming too partisan in his statements.

October: The committee running the Al Smith dinner, an annual political event hosted by the archbishop, announced that it would not invite Ms. Ferraro. This was widely interpreted as an O'Connor-inspired snub of the vice-presidential candidate. We believe this interpretation is correct.

As might be expected, some of O'Connor's subordinates call him a "showboat." They point out that one of the first moves he made after Your Holiness named him bishop of Scranton back in 1983 was to hire a press secretary. However, we believe he is simply following the example of Your Holiness. In public, he is a man of considerable force and charm. He understands he has a national platform in New York and he knows how to use it.

In attempting to evaluate Archbishop O'Connor's stewardship thus far, we have identified three key areas of concern:

(1) His stance on Church issues: We know that you have had some concern in the past about the tendency of several of your American appointees to suddenly discover liberalism upon being named bishop. This has not occurred in the case of Archbishop O'Connor. At age 65, he appears to be the same man he was during his long career as a naval chaplain (he rose to rear admiral) and later as bishop of Scranton. He is a strict constructionist on all matters relating to Church doctrine. Although he has a reputation as a man willing to listen to anyone—for instance, he is the first New York archbishop in history to meet with representatives of the city's homosexual Catholic community—he has avoided that unfortunate American tendency of wanting to democratize everything. He is fully in tune with your belief that it is the duty of the hierarchy to teach and the duty of the laity to learn. As you know, during his

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term in Scranton, O'Connor wrote a letter to his priests in which he stated, "The pulpit is not a place for theological speculation. Our people are crying for fundamentals. They hear too many uncertain trumpets, are misled by too many Pied Pipers. When they come to Mass they deserve the teaching of Jesus as articulated by the Church." O'Connor has done nothing this past year to indicate that he has swerved in any way from this belief.

On specific issues: O'Connor has not strayed from the Church's position that homosexuality is wrong. He has thrown no sops whatsoever to those American nuns and lay women who are clamoring for a larger role in the Church. He has persevered in bringing the teachings of the Vatican to America, rather than trying to explain "American values" to the Vatican, as several of his colleagues have attempted to do. He has not liberalized his position on birth control. In fact, he has not liberalized his position on anything.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

(2) His anti-abortion activities. O'Connor has, in the words of Staten Island bishop Patrick Ahern, "upped the ante on abortion all by himself. He started the ball rolling and the other bishops have been forced to go along." O'Connor has said that he would never make a speech in which he did not mention abortion. He has kept this promise; in one 30-page speech he made last October, for instance, he made 87 references to abortion and 32 to the unborn. While in Scranton, he wrote: "I categorically reject the evasion: 'I am personally opposed to abortion, but this is a pluralistic society, and I must respect the rights of those who disagree with me.' " Obviously, this has not changed. Indeed, his initial involvement in the recent American elections was a specific attempt to force Catholic politicians to toe the party line on abortion.

Two further points. First, many American Catholics are bewildered by O'Connor's election-year criticisms of Geraldine Ferraro. They have seemed to be more pointed, more personal, than what usually passes for political discourse in the United States. We believe a good part of the reason for this is that Ms. Ferraro has allied herself in the past with a group called Catholics for a Free Choice. This is a group that O'Connor holds in utter contempt. O'Connor's first criticism of Ferraro was based on a letter she had signed two years before under the aegis of the group. It said in part: "the Catholic position on abortion is not monolithic."

Second, we have heard grumbling that O'Connor's election-year statements have done great damage to Catholic politicians aspiring to national office. It is difficult to say with any certainty whether that is true. However, we do not believe it is of any concern to Archbishop O'Connor. His essential belief is that any Catholic politician who will not fight to end legalized abortion does not deserve to be elected.

(3) His relationship with his fellow bishops: As Your Holiness is well aware, Archbishop O'Connor is considerably to the right of the vast majority of American bishops, most of whom are a good deal to the left of the Democratic Party. Though he is staunchly pro-union and says all the right things about the plight of the poor and the homeless, there are a large number of specific issues where O'Connor seems more comfortable with the Reagan administration than with his brethren bishops. Central America is one such area. Several years ago, during a National Conference of Catholic Bishops meeting in Washington, O'Connor tried to block a statement critical of the Reagan administration's Central American policies. He lost 250 to ten. More recently, he has shown more independence. During his visit to Nicaragua in late February, O'Connor opposed Reagan's request for aid to the rebels fighting the Sandinista government. Another area is nuclear policy. Though O'Connor has testified before Congress against the MX missile, he was by far the most conservative of the five bishops who drafted the pastoral on war and peace, which condemned the use of nuclear weapons. During his stint on the writing committee, O'Connor began a correspondence with Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger to

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get his advice. During meetings, O'Connor would sometimes excuse himself to take telephone calls from the Pentagon. He attempted, without success, to redraft several sections of the pastoral, and even to change certain key words (from "halting" to "curbing" the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons). He was consistently unsuccessful in these attempts.

O'Connor's election-year maneuvering has only deepened the rift between himself and the majority of bishops. Most of the bishops have gone to great lengths to avoid the appearance of siding with one political party. For instance, the release of the long-awaited draft of their pastoral on economics was delayed until after the election because it could be perceived as supporting the Democratic agenda. O'Connor clearly has flouted this unwritten rule. During the campaign, the bishops' conference issued statements, in obvious response to O'Connor, reminding the hierarchy about the need to stay nonpartisan.

The larger question is: How should the American bishops approach the abortion issue? Here is where O'Connor disagrees most fundamentally with his colleagues. We believe that the outcome of this debate will largely define the public perception of American bishops.

O'Connor believes that abortion is a holocaust in our midst—the single most important moral issue the nation now faces. He has said, "If the unborn in a mother's womb is unsafe, it becomes ludicrous for the bishops to address the threat of nuclear war or the great problems of the homeless." If this makes him sound like a single-issue zealot, he doesn't care. He *is* a single-issue zealot. If it makes him appear to be siding with the Republican Party, he doesn't care about that either.

Joseph Cardinal Bernadin of Chicago, the intellectual leader of the liberal bishops, has taken a completely different approach, which he calls "the seamless garment." According to this theory, abortion is but one of a number of issues—nuclear weapons, the death penalty, the plight of the poor being among the others—that require "a consistent ethic of life." He believes that Catholic teaching should give all of these issues equal weight. The seamless garment approach, in Bernadin's view, has the added advantage of avoiding the "single-issue" tag, which he believes taints the Church.

Bernadin has the numbers with him, but O'Connor still has the front page of *The New York Times*, which gives him a perhaps insurmountable advantage. Unless Your Holiness decides to personally intervene in this debate, O'Connor will continue to hold the upper hand.

IN CLOSING, we would like to comment on the growing perception that O'Connor is becoming the new Cardinal Spellman, who was a great back-room power broker during his long reign as New York archbishop. First, given the current attitude of Americans toward political bosses we think it unlikely that Americans would allow the rise of another figure like Spellman. The press would be quick to report any back-room deals. Politicians like Mario Cuomo would be equally quick to denounce them. Second, we believe that O'Connor's very nature is too public to be comfortable with the Spellman approach. Spellman wanted to wield political power; O'Connor wants to fight his battles—most of which revolve around what he sees as the fundamental teachings of the Catholic Church—from his bully pulpit.

In sum, O'Connor is not a throwback to the past, as is sometimes suggested. Rather he is a bishop who is well-suited for your larger plan of restoring discipline and papal authority within the American Church. As such he represents, whether American Catholics like it or not, the wave of the future. We trust you are pleased with his progress.

JOSEPH NOCERA

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The peril of the powerful dollar.

FUTURE FISCAL SHOCK

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S budget proposals for 1986 pose the central economic issue he avoided during the election campaign. Does continued growth without inflation require a radical cutback in the size of government, as the president now asserts, or do we have other options? Is Reagan right that increasing taxes would condemn us once again to slow growth and high inflation? Although the 1984 election appeared to be a referendum on the issue of new taxes, the central question of the role of government was only obliquely addressed. It is not as though Walter Mondale's promise of higher taxes to close the deficit was pitted against a comparable promise by President Reagan to make the cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, student loans, nutrition, farm supports, and dozens of other programs that he has now proposed. Until after November, Reagan insisted that economic growth alone would solve our budget and other economic ills.

Reagan at last has answered John Anderson's 1980 campaign taunt about how to cut taxes, increase defense spending, and balance the budget at the same time. The answer is not mirrors, as Anderson suggested, but a fiscal ax. In the 1986 budget proposals, entitlement programs are to be cut by a total of $149 billion during fiscal years 1986 through 1990. Other discretionary programs, such as student loans, low-income housing, veterans medical care, and training assistance, are to be cut by $207 billion.

There are two ways to examine the proposed budget cuts. One is to look at each program by itself, and ask whether it is serving a desirable public purpose. David Stockman is the president's point man for this approach. The other way is to examine the budget cuts from a "macro" perspective. Are drastic spending cuts the best

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way to foster economic growth, low inflation, and high employment, or would some combination of spending cuts and higher tax revenues be superior? Scaling back the ongoing defense increase can mitigate this painful choice, but can't eliminate it.

For President Reagan, the answer is clear. In his view, the economic successes of the past two years result from the tax cuts of his first term. To reduce the deficits by tax increases would simply undo this triumph. Since Reagan also opposes social programs on the "micro" grounds that they serve no useful public purpose, his "macro" argument that the cuts are needed for future growth is convenient. But for those who believe in many of these programs, the macroeconomic issue is especially troubling. Growth *is* important.

FORTUNATELY, the macroeconomic evidence does not support Reagan's view. The effects of reducing the deficit will be about the same whether it is done by expenditure cuts or well-chosen tax increases. The fiscal choice is truly the political one of who in our society should bear the burden of restoring budget balance to preserve the macroeconomic recovery.

There's no denying that America's macroeconomic performance so far during Reagan's presidency has been outstanding. In the first four years, he constantly confounded his critics. They said in 1981 that ending inflation would require a decade of slow growth; in 1982 that high interest rates would prevent an economic recovery; in 1983 that high interest rates would abort the recovery; and in 1984 that the United States would slip into recession by early 1985. America's performance has been especially bright in comparison with Europe's, which has never recovered from the downturn of the early 1980s. Unemployment remains over ten percent in the European Community, with little prospect for a dramatic reversal soon.

The success of Reaganomics can be understood as an ingenious marriage of monetary and fiscal policies. The strategy—conscious or otherwise—has been to combine tight money with a strong dose of fiscal expansion by means of large tax cuts. Since 1979 the Federal Reserve Board under Paul Volcker has been continually reducing monetary growth targets. The Fed has explicitly abandoned its traditional practice of raising money growth when needed to keep interest rates under control. This has made the Fed's stand against inflation far more effective. Because Reagan's tax cuts came in the context of tight controls on money growth, the huge budget deficits he produced didn't automatically translate into inflation.

The value of combining tight money with big budget deficits was predicted over a decade ago by the Columbia University economist Robert Mundell. Mundell observed that tight money alone could cure inflation, but only at the cost of high unemployment and slow growth. On the other hand, fiscal expansion alone—either tax cuts or increased government spending—would generate growth, but with inflationary consequences. Mundell predicted that a tight monetary policy combined with big budget deficits could produce both growth and falling inflation.

The trick works because both tight money and budget deficits raise interest rates and cause the dollar to rise in value relative to other currencies. The stronger dollar reduces import prices, and competition from imports keeps domestic inflation in check. The dollar is now worth about 60 percent more than when Reagan took office.

Compare the effects of the Reagan policy mix with some others that have been tried. The Carter policies were basically the opposite: loose money and fairly tight fiscal policy. They too resulted in growth, but with a falling dollar, and sharply higher import prices. A large part of the high U.S. inflation of the late 1970s was imported from abroad.

Britain's Margaret Thatcher and Germany's Helmut Kohl have adopted tight monetary policies, but without Reagan's fiscal expansion. In fact, both governments have pursued very austere fiscal policies. The result has been low inflation but high unemployment. France's François Mitterrand, on the other hand, tried a fiscal expansion in 1981 and 1982, but without the tight monetary policy. He got some modest growth but higher inflation. The franc was battered, and the fiscal expansion was eventually reversed in 1983.

Of course all this is hindsight. The Reagan administration never mentioned Mundell's strategy when the tax cuts were enacted in 1981. In fact, the supply-siders defended the tax cuts on the grounds that they would be self-financing, and would not lead to sustained deficits at all. Even if the benefits of tight money and loose budgets were not foreseen in 1981, the staying power of this strategy has resulted from the eventual recognition of its value. The political will to cut the deficits would have materialized long ago if the deficits in fact had delivered the high inflation and slow growth that many feared.

It must also be remembered that this new-time religion has been only a part of Reagan's success against inflation. The old-time religion of high unemployment, especially in 1982 and 1983, also played a major role. Even today, the unemployment rate, at 7.4 percent, sits well above the historical average, and thus provides a further check to inflation. It is part of Reagan's political skill that he has convinced the country that we are back to full employment even at unemployment rates previously associated with deep recession.

IN APPLYING the old-time religion, Reagan was astute enough to realize that the recession of 1982 would be long forgotten by November 1984. Indeed, Mondale barely mentioned it during the campaign. In fact, an anti-inflationary recession early in the administration has been a key Republican practice for 30 years. Every Republican administration has begun with a downturn: 1953, 1957, 1969, 1973, and 1981. Democrats, by contrast, like to start with a boom (after all, that is what their labor constituency demands) and they usually end with high inflation. Carter is merely the latest in this sad tradition.

So has Ronald Reagan found the secret of permanent inflation-free prosperity? Unfortunately, no. A strategy

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mix of big budget deficits combined with tight money cannot be pursued forever. Eventually, the policy mix must be reversed. One reason is that interest costs on the public debt are growing rapidly. Unless the deficits are reduced, interest payments will squeeze out more and more of other government spending. Interest costs are already increasing faster than any other category of the budget, including defense.

Perhaps even more important, the strong dollar will eventually impose major costs on the U.S. economy. It has been a major check on inflation, but it is also the prime factor in last year's $120 billion trade deficit. The strong dollar causes lost jobs in export industries (including the family farm, now so much in the news), but those lost jobs are being balanced by new jobs in the rest of the economy. A more difficult aspect of the trade deficit is a growing foreign debt. When a country runs a trade deficit, its residents buy more abroad than they sell, and this imbalance must be paid for by borrowing from the rest of the world. Last year the U.S. net liabilities to the rest of the world rose by $100 billion, more than the entire foreign debt of Brazil. For the first time since 1914, foreign financial claims on Americans are as large as American financial holdings abroad. Unless our budget and monetary policies change, the United States will owe more than $500 billion in net external debt by the end of the decade, far more than the total external debt of all of the Latin American borrowers combined. Our political power and economic policy flexibility would be seriously jeoparized if this happened.

WHEN THE budget deficits are finally cut and monetary policy is eased a bit, the dollar will fall, and we will re-import some of the inflation that we exported in the early 1980s. A 30 percent drop in the dollar probably would raise inflation by about two percentage points for a couple of years. Even so, a return to double-digit rates is unlikely. The high unemployment of Reagan's first term substantially reduced the rate of wage increases, and the depreciation of the dollar probably will not reignite rapid wage growth. The credibility of the Federal Reserve Board has been greatly bolstered by its strong commitment against inflation in recent years. Nobody expects Volcker to reopen the floodgates of monetary expansion, and wage and price setters will take note of that restraint.

Reducing the budget deficit will have about the same effect whether spending is cut or taxes are raised. What counts for the value of the dollar, and for growth, and for inflation, and for interest rates, is the size of the deficit much more than its composition. Of course taxes should not be slapped on without due regard for their incentive effects. Spending cuts should not be made in a slapdash manner, either.

If taxes on wage income go up, workers might attempt to recoup by demanding higher pay than they otherwise would. In this one case, a rise in taxes could lead to slightly more inflation than an equivalent cut in public spending. The tax cuts of 1981-83 probably made it a bit easier for employers to extract wage concessions from workers, who saw their take-home pay rising because of the tax cuts. Thus the tax cuts may have helped to speed the anti-inflation process, though this effect seems to have been rather small. In any event, this inflationary danger could be reduced by avoiding direct tax increases on wages, and moving instead to close various loopholes on corporate and personal income.

By focusing all of the public's attention on spending cuts, Reagan hopes to bring about a dramatic scaling back of the federal government. But he may inadvertently teach people an important truth about government spending, and thereby restore their willingness to consider tax increases. Faced with Reagan's actual budget-cut proposals, people are at last beginning to understand that all the talk about putting welfare mothers back to work has nothing really to do with balancing the public budget. A complete elimination of the whole welfare (AFDC) program would do no more than reduce the deficit by nine billion dollars, from $230 billion to $221 billion in 1986. With 75 percent of the budget allocated to military spending, Medicare, Social Security and other retirement plans, unemployment insurance, and interest payments on the debt, we would have to close down nearly the rest of the government in order to save the $230 billion needed for budget balance in 1986. Clearly, tax increases will have to be considered.

Ironically, the administration itself has prepared the groundwork for sensible increases in tax revenues. The tax reform proposals of the Treasury have underscored the tens of billions of dollars of tax revenues now lost through loopholes of various sorts. Without touching personal income tax rates, tax revenues could be raised substantially by closing many of these loopholes. To take an extreme illustration, if the Treasury's tax proposal is enacted to the letter, except that personal tax rates are left unchanged (rather than being cut further, as in the Treasury proposal), the government would collect approximately $100 billion a year in new revenues. Such increases would almost exactly match the spending cuts proposed by the administration.

Two ideas, then, could substantially improve the current debate on budget policy. First, the success so far of Reaganomics has depended on expansionary budget policies, but not on the tax cuts per se. Our macroeconomic prospects won't be much different whether we choose to cut the deficit through spending cuts or tax increases. Second, there simply is not that much to cut. Reagan's proposals for $51 billion in cuts in 1986 already go to the meat of public spending by cutting programs for child nutrition, education for the handicapped, health care for veterans, and the like. Modest changes in taxes, without disturbing personal tax rates, could easily restore the capacity to fund these domestic programs in future years.

JEFFREY SACHS

Jeffrey Sachs is a professor of economics at Harvard University.

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The last chance for peace and national reconciliation.

A PEACE PLAN FOR NICARAGUA

BY ARTURO CRUZ AND ARTURO CRUZ JR.

NICARAGUA'S elections last November, far from easing the country's crisis, only compounded it. The elections were neither free nor fair, and brought Nicaragua no closer to democracy. According to the annual report of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, the Sandinistas used their absolute control of the state to place themselves in a position of advantage over other contestants and to consolidate their power. The other governments of Central America, ranging from parliamentary democracies to military dictatorships, agreed. None of Nicaragua's neighbors sent delegations to the inauguration of President-elect Daniel Ortega. Carlos Andres Perez, the former president of Venezuela and now vice chairman of the Socialist International, publicly declined to attend, stating that "those of us who believe we have done so much for the Sandinista revolution feel cheated because sufficient guarantees were not provided to assure the participation of all political forces." Andres Perez called upon Ortega "to reflect upon what the rest of the world hoped for from the great revolution of all the Nicaraguan people: political pluralism, a mixed economy, and non-alignment—as the revolution pledged—conveying the true wishes of its people."

We of the democratic opposition within Nicaragua have consistently made the same appeal. Our organization, the Coordinadora Democratica, which is the largest opposition group in the country, planned to register for the November elections provided the government guaranteed that opposition leaders and their followers could assemble, organize, and campaign freely. By refusing to meet even the most minimal concessions, the Sandinistas made it impossible for the Coordinadora to run. We were not alone. Virgilio Godoy, a former Sandinista labor minister and the widely respected leader of the Independent Liberal Party, also withdrew from the race. Even the docile splinter parties that ran in the campaign have now joined the outright opposition in their demands against the regime. The socialist and the communist parties have both signed a document denouncing the dire state of public affairs and the electoral process.

Arturo Cruz, a former member of the ruling Sandinista junta and former Nicaraguan ambassador to the United States, is the leader of the country's democratic opposition. Arturo Cruz Jr. is an adviser to his father.

The opposition leaders—politicians (including Godoy), labor leaders, and businessmen—told me in January that they intend to remain inside Nicaragua whatever the consequences. But as the Sandinistas encounter more popular pressure to open up the political process, their tactics are likely to prove less effective, and they will curtail civil liberties even more.

The Sandinistas are stepping up their struggle against the armed resistance as well. They are vigorously increasing both the volume and quality of their military operations. They have acquired weaponry far more sophisticated than that of any other Central American country. Outside of Nicaragua, the Sandinistas are waging a propaganda campaign, designed to distort the truth about the rebellion. They are attempting to get the rebels off their backs either through direct negotiations with Washington, or by undermining United States support for the insurgents in Congress and among the American public by claiming that they have no popular support.

Likewise, the Sandinistas profess a willingness to reach an accommodation through the Contadora peace process. Their true intention, though, is to preserve a free hand for the consolidation of their power in exchange for a few tactical security commitments to the United States at the regional level. Nicaragua's neighbors oppose this kind of solution, knowing that unless the Sandinistas accept democracy they will always pose a threat to regional peace.

Now that the space for democratic action has narrowed, it is all the more critical for the opposition to use its few remaining political options effectively. Supporters of democracy in Nicaragua must understand that blanket support for the Sandinistas or opposition to the Reagan administration will not bring permanent peace to Nicaragua. It is necessary to remove the causes of what has become virtually a civil war, including those for which the Sandinistas are responsible. The Sandinistas' excesses have incited Nicaraguans to armed rebellion. Now the Sandinistas must make genuine modifications in their policies if we are to avoid national bloodshed.

Four points must be kept in mind.

First, the armed opposition in Nicaragua has a real social basis. What is true of the insurgency in El Salvador also applies in Nicaragua: you cannot manufacture revolu-

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tions. The sheer fact that the ranks of the so-called *contras* now include 12,000 to 15,000 men is a telling sign that something is genuinely wrong in Nicaragua. The rebels can no longer be dismissed as "mercenaries." They have gone from being an instrument of U.S. policy to a social movement.

Second, it follows that the fundamental conflict in Nicaragua is among Nicaraguans. The question "Can the United States learn to live with a revolutionary regime?" is misplaced. The problem is not between Washington and Managua. It cannot be resolved by the talks between representatives of the Sandinista government and the Reagan administration that have been held in recent months in the Mexican city of Manzanillo. The real question is whether Nicaraguans can or should learn to live with a vanguard—the Sandinistas—whose ideological ambitions are rejected by the rest of the society.

Third, in order for the Nicaraguan revolution to survive and to become a model for all of Central America, the Sandinistas must modify their ideologicial ambitions. The Sandinista ideology is sometimes called Marxist-Leninist, but that label cannot mean much in a country that has practically no working class. What matters is that the shopkeepers are furious with the restrictions of the government, the farmworkers want to be left alone, the city dwellers don't want to be watched by the block committees. But whether the Sandinistas have enough autonomy from the Soviet Union and Cuba to modify their totalitarian inclinations is open to serious doubt.

Fourth, it is important to recognize the possibility that for the Sandinistas ideology and political practicality may go hand in hand. It may be that the Sandinistas have so alienated the Nicaraguan people that if they do not exercise absolute power, they will exercise no power at all. Even if they now made room for the opposition, they might not be able to control the discontent. The people speaking through the democratic process might demand new leaders. The Sandinistas would have to hand over power to others, which they would never do. Or they would have to repress the Nicaraguan people ever more violently.

WE DO NOT yet assume that it is too late to negotiate. In the coming days the democratic opposition leaders will challenge the Sandinistas to a national dialogue. With a sense of urgency we want to explore the last hope of achieving peace through national reconciliation and democracy and by avoiding the catastrophe of bloodshed that otherwise lies ahead. We urge President Ortega to avoid the ideological blackmail of his more extremist supporters. In the national insurrection against Somoza, Ortega showed imagination and flexibility in working with all sectors of Nicaraguan society. We hope that he will show similar imagination and flexibility now and prevent a full-scale civil war.

To begin with, we need a gesture of goodwill from each side. The rebels should proclaim a unilateral ceasefire, and the Sandinistas should proclaim an effective amnesty for all political prisoners. Everyone who is in jail for political crimes—some 1,400 people, according to the Nicaraguan Human Rights Commission—should be released immediately.

From these measures we need to move to create the proper climate for a national debate on Nicaragua's future. We in the opposition have long called for the separation of the Sandinista party and the state. But even before that, the state and the party both must get out of civil society. This means that freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and freedom of movement must be guaranteed. *La Prensa* must be allowed to publish what it wants. University students must be allowed to read what they want and not just the books published in Moscow. (In Nicaragua today, students are not allowed to read Gramsci or Trotsky.) The block committees, the so-called Committees in Defense of the Revolution, must end their role as instruments of social control. They must not, for example, be the organization that distributes rationing cards. Once these measures are taken, the conditions will exist for Nicaraguans alone to freely decide Nicaragua's future. We ask the Sandinistas: Can you withstand free ideological debate?

IF THE GOVERNMENT and the opposition come to some kind of formal pact about Nicaragua's future, we propose that the bishops of Nicaragua, in the presence of representatives of the other Central American governments and the Contadora countries, act as witnesses, supervisors, and guarantors of whatever agreement is reached.

To begin this debate, we offer these specific and moderate points. We must rectify the injustices of the last election with a new electoral process. President Ortega should remain as president within the parameters of the Sandinistas' original Plan of Government offered in 1979. However, the assembly elected in November should be dissolved and a new, genuinely open campaign held. The reconstituted assembly should then draw up a new constitution and establish an independent judiciary. Eventually a national plebiscite can be held to decide whether Nicaragua needs a new president.

But it is not the details that are most important. What matters is the commitment to democratic institutions governed by regular popular elections. Unlike the guerrillas in El Salvador, we are not demanding power, we are demanding only our rights. We do not want a military solution; we want a constitutional solution. But the Sandinistas have driven tens of thousands of Nicaraguans to believe that there is no alternative but armed struggle. The U.S. Congress may cut off aid to these forces, but that will not change their minds; nor will it end the conflict. Only the creation of a just and open society will end Nicaragua's civil war. It is now the Sandinistas' obligation to contribute to the creation of that society and to redeem the promise of the Nicaraguan revolution. □

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What Ronald Reagan could learn from Charles Dickens.

ABANDONED AMERICANS

BY DOROTHY WICKENDEN

ON SUNDAY, November 4, a few hours after he ended his 51-day hunger strike, Mitch Snyder appeared on "60 Minutes." Mike Wallace began by calling him "the shepherd of the homeless in Washington, the nation's capital," and, toward the end of the interview, asked in his most seductive manner: "Gandhi, Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King—Mitch Snyder?" "No," Snyder replied in a rare burst of modesty, "I wouldn't go that far." He had already gone pretty far: he had starved himself nearly to death in order to bludgeon the Reagan administration into supplying up to five million dollars to repair the moldering shelter for the homeless he runs at 425 Second Street NW, just north of the Capitol. The administration, faced with the prospect of a martyred Snyder on television's highest-rated news show two days before the election, capitulated.

Four months later, the repairs are still in the planning stage. In the meantime, the building remains, as Snyder pithily puts it, "a place fit for vermin and trash." Heavy metal screens have been affixed to all of the windows to keep out vandals. The cavernous concrete basement serves as a feeding and "drop-in" center for up to 1,000 men during the day and early evening. At 8 p.m. the upper-floor dormitories open. (A separate section of the building houses about 100 women at night. They are asked to leave at 8 a.m. There is as yet nowhere for them to go during the day.) The stairways reek of urine and many of the walls have been kicked in. Five or six live-in volunteers patrol the shelter's labyrinthine corridors and dormitory rooms with walkie-talkies in case of trouble. As I arrived one night this winter, a man was being ejected from the premises for attacking another "guest." Snyder matter-of-factly pointed out a pool of congealed blood near one stairwell: "A guy was stabbed here a few nights ago. No one's cleaned it up yet."

The First District police, who file the reports on assaults, disorderly conduct, and thefts at the shelter, refer to it as "the Second Street Hilton." Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret Heckler, who granted Snyder the initial temporary lease on the federally owned building last winter and was a guest speaker at its festive opening, billed it as "a sanctuary" and "a symbol of hope. . . . There is enough love here today to heat this building for many years. So that is no problem." Heckler's optimism proved to be premature. Snyder is well known for his imperious manner. He refuses to work with other shelter administrators in the city, and as a self-proclaimed anarchist he believes that "the federal and local governments have no right to exist." "We accept only neutral things from them," he told me, "like buildings." A few months after the opening lovefest, Snyder announced that if the lease was not extended, he and his group would set up tents in Lafayette Park across from the White House. The administration agreed to his demands, as it did when he began appearing, wraithlike, on "Nightline" and "60 Minutes."

What should we do about the homeless? Preventing people from starving to death or dying of exposure in the streets is the absolute minimal obligation of society. To his credit, Snyder has forced America to recollect that obligation. Yet the sprouting of emergency shelters like the one at Second Street are hardly "symbols of hope." These new "sanctuaries," chronically underfunded and poorly staffed, are often dangerous as well as squalid. They are the end product of a long chain of abysmal social failures. They started off as temporary havens. In the absence of any coherent policy, they have evolved into an alternate form of public housing and psychiatric care. The truth is that they resemble nothing so much as the poor houses and insane asylums of the past.

There is still considerable confusion about how many homeless people there are in America, who they are, why they are on the streets, and how they should be provided for. And it's not for lack of attention. Over the past several years, countless reports have been written, congressional hearings held, task forces formed, and lawsuits filed on behalf of a group of people that was once politically powerless and socially invisible. Politicians and the public, dismayed by accounts of rapidly growing numbers of people living in alleys, cars, and cardboard boxes, are beginning to address an issue that used to concern only Salvation Army workers and religious charities.

Yet the causes of homelessness are not a mystery. There is the massive release from large state hospitals of mental patients over the last 20 years, in a movement known as "deinstitutionalization"; the ever-dwindling supply of affordable housing for the poor; continuing high unemployment; and the shaving of welfare benefits and the tightening of eligibility requirements. Solutions are harder to come by.

The administration has been called to task in two congressional hearings. The first was for a report issued last May by the Department of Housing and Urban Develop-

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ment that, according to critics, whitewashed the crisis. The other, in November, focused on the administration's failure to fulfill its pledge to supply empty federal buildings and surplus food for the homeless. At the time of the hearing, only three buildings had been obtained, including Mitch Snyder's shelter. The food distributed through 190 military commissaries was found to be negligible. And $7.1 million of the eight million dollars Congress had appropriated to the Department of Defense to renovate empty military facilities had been spent on routine defense maintenance instead.

HUD's *Report on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters* became a cause célèbre for concluding, among other things, that there were "only" 250,000 to 350,000 homeless people nationwide seeking shelter on an average night in December 1983 and January 1984. "For most people who become homeless," the report says cheerily, "their condition is recent and likely to be temporary." Most studies judge the correct number to be two or three million. An enraged Mitch Snyder demanded that HUD retract its figures. For a time, this was one of the conditions for ending his fast. The congressional hearing showed fairly convincingly that the methodology of the report was indeed slipshod and that the numbers were too low.

But the HUD report, for all its inaccuracies and complacency, implicitly confirmed what other studies and newspaper stories have been saying. First, the problem is getting worse, and the rapid proliferation of shelters cannot keep pace. Even using HUD's figures, there are only about half as many beds in emergency shelters as there are people in need of them. And second, the widespread impression that most of the homeless are chronically alcoholic or mentally ill is wrong. The shelter population is actually getting younger; the average age is usually judged to be 34. HUD says that at least 35 percent to 40 percent of the total is recently unemployed. And this group is getting to look more like the typical poor: there are more minority people, particularly blacks, and more single-parent families.

MUCH HAS BEEN made of the failures of deinstitutionalization. A widely cited clinical study published last December in *The American Journal of Psychiatry* claimed that at one supposedly typical shelter in Boston at least 40 percent of the residents were psychotics, 29 percent were chronic alcoholics, and 21 percent had severe personality disorders of one kind or another. The implication is that 90 percent of homeless people are drunks or lunatics. That's a big exaggeration. The Task Force Report of the American Psychiatric Association, *The Homeless Mentally Ill*, the most thorough and widely respected investigation of the subject, estimates that of about two million homeless people in the United States, perhaps "as many as half suffer from alcohol, drug abuse, or mental health problems." Most other nationwide studies confirm this conclusion.

Clearly a lot of homeless people got that way as casualties of a cruelly ineffective mental health system, and emergency shelters are a poor substitute for sustained psychiatric care. Many of the deinstitutionalized who had been living relatively independent lives lost their Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income—and subsequently their homes—in the Reagan administration's 1981 paring down of benefits and purging of the rolls. What's more, a new generation of "space cases," as they are known among other street people, is beginning to show up in city shelters. Many of them are schizophrenics; others are strung out on drugs like PCP. Apart from occasional trips to hospital emergency rooms, most have received no professional help of any kind.

Nevertheless, the composition of the homeless population is changing. The hundreds of thousands who crowd through the doors of city shelters, welfare hotels, churches, and synagogues each night for a meal and a mattress are not only the traditional social outcasts—the bag ladies, skid-row alcoholics, and muttering schizophrenics who are a familiar part of the urban landscape. In growing numbers they are being joined there by battered women, elderly poor and disabled, and—most significantly—unemployed people with their entire families.

IN THE MIDST of the recession a few years ago, the papers were filled with stories of lines at soup kitchens, Great Depression-style. Today, in the midst of the economic recovery, the stories are about unemployed workers in the industrial Midwest whose benefits have expired and who can no longer afford their rent; or about people living in cars; or about families seeking temporary shelter at city welfare offices. It is becoming apparent that many of the poor have not shared in the economic recovery. Indeed, many of them have suffered from it.

Every major recent study cites neighborhood gentrification and the decline in low-income housing (particularly single-room occupancy hotels, or SROs) as principal causes of homelessness. *The Making of America's Homeless*, the latest report by the nonpartisan research group, the Community Services Society, estimates that 2.5 million Americans every year lose their homes, and about 500,000 low-rent apartments vanish as a result of conversion, arson, abandonment, inflation, and demolition. In Denver, which is experiencing both rapid redevelopment and an influx of unemployed from the industrial belt, the problem is particularly severe. Boarding houses in the low-rent districts are being replaced by condominiums; the number of boarding-room beds decreased from about 1,300 to about 400 over the last eight years, according to the National Coalition on the Homeless. Numerous shelter administrators emphasized that most of their charges are the new poor.

In mid-February Ruth Marcus reported in *The Washington Post* that shelters in the suburbs are now being inundated by the working poor. "Often working at service jobs for the minimum wage of $3.50 an hour . . . they may be hit by a run of bad luck, or their housing situation may simply collapse under the strain of skyrocketing suburban rents." Even when the overall unemployment rate is going down, people still lose their jobs—and their homes. A

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report by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, *Homelessness in America's Cities*, concluded that although unemployment had dropped in the ten cities it studied, the population in need of emergency shelter had increased. Spokesmen in San Francisco said that 63 percent of those in shelters have "marketable skills." New York City's Human Resources Administration, which runs the city shelter system, says that about 30 percent of recent arrivals were there because they had recently lost their jobs. As the Community Services Society explains in *Hardship in the Heartland*, "Something happens—a job is lost, unemployment benefits run out, creditors and banks move in to foreclose, eviction proceedings begin—and quite suddenly the respectable poor find themselves among the disreputable homeless."

One especially vulnerable group is poor young families. They have suffered at the hands of the Reagan administration over the last four years: in slashes in housing assistance ($1.8 billion), Aid to Families with Dependent Children ($4.8 billion), child nutrition ($5.2 billion), food stamps ($6.8 billion), and low-income energy assistance ($700 million). For many years shortsighted local housing policies have fostered urban renewal but have given scant attention to those removed from condemned buildings. And families that lose their homes soon discover that social service bureaucracies are already overextended.

In New York City the number of homeless families housed by the city in hotels has more than doubled since January 1983, rising from 1,400 to 3,285 last December. On January 9 this year, New York's shelters and hotels took in an unprecedented 20,000 people; 63 percent of them were families. Tens of thousands of other poor families are believed to be "doubling up" with friends and relatives. Even more disturbing, according to Robert Hayes, counsel to the National Coalition for the Homeless, there are now more children under the age of 16 than there are single adults staying in the city's emergency shelter system. A wrenching story by Jane Gross in *The New York Times* in January chronicled the seven-month ordeal of a pregnant woman and her five children who spent countless days and nights being sent from local welfare offices to overcrowded shelters to an HRA Emergency Assistance Unit—none of which had so much as a bed to spare. "Often, those in the shelters yearn for a berth in a single-room occupancy hotel. But those who have braved the hotels, where they say they are often robbed and molested, return gratefully to the shelters they once clamored to leave. Some say they prefer the streets to the degrading and debilitating process of finding a bed, but are chased indoors by fear, cold, illness, or terror that the Bureau of Child Welfare will separate them from their children."

Here in Washington, the city currently copes with family homelessness through what is known as the "open market" system. Homeless families must go each day to the aptly named Pitts Hotel at 14th and Belmont Streets NW, where they receive their meals and a room assignment for the night. If the Pitts is full, they are given bus fare and sent to one of two other dismal hotels on the outskirts of the city, or to the Greentree Shelter in Bethesda, Maryland. The next day they return to the Pitts, and begin the process again. Many families shuttle among the hotels for months as they search frantically for an apartment they can afford.

Some of the luckier open-market families wind up just down the road from the Pitts, at the Community of Hope, housed in a renovated apartment building on Belmont Street. The organization, which is funded by the city, is run by Tom Nees, a minister in the Church of the Nazarene. Families pay a small rental fee to live temporarily in the building. The money is put into an escrow account and given to the family when it leaves, ideally within 90 days. Nees's group includes health and social services, legal aid, job assistance, emergency housing assistance and counseling, and so on.

"Family homelessness," Nees says, "is primarily an economic problem. Street people are traumatized, and will be dependent regardless. That's not true with families, where homelessness produces the trauma." The families at the Community of Hope rarely include a husband or father. Five of the dozen women staying there at the time of my visit worked full-time, but didn't earn enough to rent apartments of their own. Others were welfare mothers who had parceled out their children to friends and relatives or foster care. Nees tries to get such families back together. Most of the women had been living in cramped quarters with friends or relatives. Their families broke up when overcrowding in a small apartment became intolerable, or when the landlord threatened to revoke the lease, or when they realized the impossibility of finding a place cheap and big enough for all of them. Washington's public housing office is still processing applications filed ten years ago; there are no federal funds to speak of.

Nees also tries to urge the women on to greater self-sufficiency. But he can help only the employable—"We don't know how to begin with the others." And for many of the women, a minimum-wage job would hardly help.

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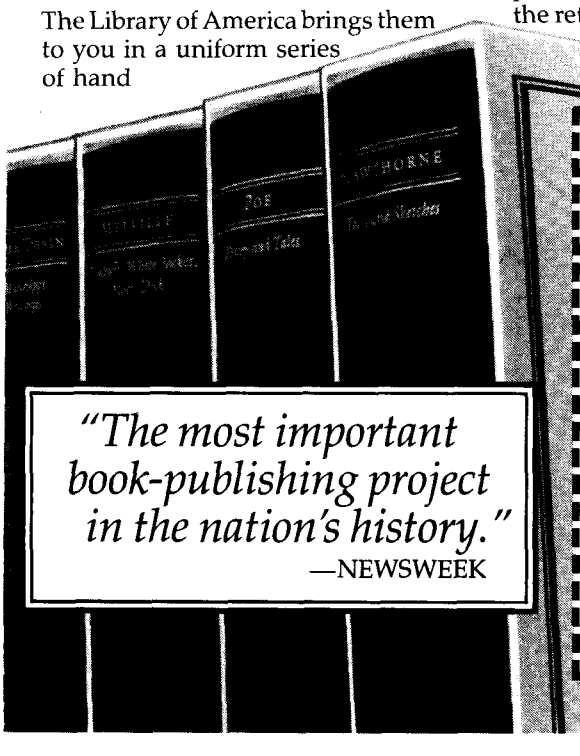

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"A woman with five or six kids could be getting $1,000 a month in food stamps and AFDC. She'd have to earn $12,000 a year to compare with that. It's a terrible dilemma. There is now a disincentive to enter the job market at the minimum wage—you can't raise yourself above the poverty line."

Cities are spending considerable sums on emergency measures like the Pitts that do little or nothing to solve these families' problems: no housing and no jobs. The D.C. government shells out between $80 and $250 a day for each open-market family. Nees's costs are $40-$45 a day. New York spends a minimum of $1,200 a month to put up a family of four in a city shelter. As the Task Force Report of the American Psychiatric Association describes it, "City policy toward the homeless is best described as one that lurches from court order to court order. . . . Harvests of waste rather than economies of scale are reaped when crisis management becomes the modus operandi of housing and social service agencies." Or, as Nees puts it, "They're just putting out fires and picking up the bodies."

THESE PIECEMEAL, insufficient, and expensive efforts are an accurate reflection of ambivalent policies and beliefs. Two decades ago, during the Kennedy administration, the wards of state mental hospitals were emptied out at the urging of progressive politicians and psychiatrists who justifiably denounced the mistreatment of inmates and the wretched conditions, and who believed that the mentally ill had the right—and, with proper medication and counseling, the ability—to live productive lives in the community.

Today the betrayal of that vision is well known. Patients were precipitously released regardless of whether local facilities could provide adequate follow-up care—indeed, regardless of whether those facilities even existed. Communities fought the establishment of halfway houses and clinics in residential neighborhoods, and local governments were reluctant to fund them. The mental health centers that were established were designed more for treatment of people with occasional problems than for chronic patients. Families often found themselves unable to cope with the strains of caring for a disturbed sibling or parent or child. And the new miracle drugs proved to be less of a cure-all than the psychiatrists had hoped. Though untold numbers successfully made the transition from years of custodial care to independent lives outside, many thousands of the most needy did not.

One of the deeply held principles of the Reagan administration is that people not only have a right to self-determination, but a duty as well. Last winter when President Reagan was asked on "Good Morning America" about the widespread impression that his policies are causing misery among the poor, he replied: "What we have found in this country—and maybe we're more aware of it now—is one problem that we've had, even in the best of times, and that is the people who are sleeping on the grates, the homeless who are homeless, you might say, by choice." That is, if people choose not to get a job, and not to care for themselves responsibly, it must be a matter of life-style. In any case, it should not be a matter of pressing concern to the federal government.

The failures of deinstitutionalization, the sluggishness of city bureaucracies, and the Reagan administration's laissez-faire precepts have led to a contrary notion among those concerned about the homeless: the "right to shelter." The 1979 case of *Callahan* v. *Carey* in New York state's Supreme Court established that the city had a legal obligation to provide shelter for the homeless. A few weeks later, in one of the most ironic repercussions yet of the community mental health movement, New York City opened the Keener Shelter on Wards Island—an empty building in one of those large, isolated state psychiatric hospitals that had been shut down. But the city balked when it came to overseeing the shelter: two subsequent lawsuits were brought—and won—against the city for failing to maintain adequate health standards, and for allowing severe overcrowding. A facility designed to hold up to 180 men was taking in 600 each night.

Many citizens are ready to recognize the right to shelter, but not to welcome the homeless into their neighborhoods. This point was neatly made in Washington recently. On election day an initiative—conceived by Mitch Snyder's group, the Community for Creative Non-Violence—requiring the District to provide shelter to everyone who requests it was passed by a resounding 72 percent, despite the opposition of virtually every politician and activist in the city. A few weeks after the vote, during a town meeting in Georgetown to discuss the possible opening of a small shelter for women in the neighborhood, a woman serving on the Advisory Neighborhood Commission stood up and objected, "What do you mean support services? I voted for Initiative 17, but I thought I was just voting for mattresses on the floor."

PARTLY for this reason, some are now advocating a return to the days of asylum. On "Nightline" recently, George Will made the case bluntly. "We constantly in this country talk about every problem in terms of a clash of individual rights," he said. "The community has some rights here. If it is illegal, and it is, and ought to be illegal, to litter the streets, frankly it ought to be illegal for people who must survive in panhandling among other things to sleep on the streets. Therefore there is a simple matter of public order and hygiene in getting these people somewhere else. Not arrest them, but move them off to someplace where they are simply out of sight and no longer a visible, in some cases intrusive, in some cases even an aggressive, public nuisance." The trouble with Will's trash removal solution is that the problem is not a "simple matter of public order"—or a simple matter of anything else. For the vast majority of the homeless, reinstitutionalization is not a sensible solution.

The first, most obvious, step is to create respectable, affordable, permanent housing. The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that at least 750,000 new apartments a year are needed. City and state governments

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are now beginning to recognize the urgency of the situation. Since 1983 New York has renovated for the homeless 4,500 vacant apartments owned by the city. Mayor Koch—under relentless pressure from advocacy groups and City Council members Ruth Messinger and Carol Bellamy, his opponent in the mayoral race—has stopped awarding tax breaks to real estate developers eager to convert SROs into luxury condominiums. New York governor Mario Cuomo and Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis have made specialized housing programs for the poor, disabled, and elderly—closely connected to mental health and social service programs—a top priority.

The Reagan administration, on the other hand, appears to have decided to renounce once and for all any meaningful federal support. HUD's budget authority for assistance to additional households was cut from $30 billion to $11 billion in Reagan's first term. In his fiscal 1986 budget, he proposes to chop that by an additional 95 percent, to $499 million. The impact of these cuts, which are spread over a period of 20 years, has hardly been felt yet. Most housing analysts agree that although cities and states and private organizations may be better suited to administer effective housing programs, they simply don't have enough money for the initial investment, especially in cities like New York, where the need for low-income housing has become desperate.

IN THE LONG RUN, emergency shelters will cost everyone a great deal more than permanent apartments, group homes, and a mental health system that values patients' well-being as much as their freedom. Public policy is being driven by defensiveness and a failure of nerve. There are efficient and even modestly successful organizations out there that have put to good use whatever truncated services are available, without placing undue strain on the public purse.

Doubtless a small percentage of the chronically mentally ill will need continuing supervised care in a structured setting. The St. Francis Residence on Manhattan's East Side and now the St. Francis Residence II on the West Side are repeatedly cited as examples of decent, long-term, inexpensive care for the mentally ill. Both were former SRO hotels that were renovated through donations to the St. Francis of Assisi Friends of the Poor. "Our intention," says Father John Felice, who founded the homes, "is to make the social service system work." Unlike the huge armories and flophouses run by the city, St. Francis demands that the dignity and privacy of each resident be respected. Tenants are guaranteed a room of their own, for which they pay $145-$210 per month out of their welfare payments, Social Security, SSI, or—if they have a job—their paychecks. Occasionally one of the men or women will require a period of hospitalization, in which case his or her room is held open. It costs St. Francis a modest $15-$20 a day for each of its residents. Many men are afraid to spend a single night at the city shelters. The tenants at St. Francis consider it their home. There is very little turnover.

For those whose suffering is less existential than economic, there are any number of possibilities. In Washington the Community of Hope, which assists families, is only one of them. There is McKenna House, which takes in unemployed men, assists them in finding jobs, and helps them to become fully independent again. There is the Reverend John and Erna Steinbruck's "N Street Village" at Luther Place on Thomas Circle, which includes—in addition to an emergency shelter for homeless women inside the Luther Place Church—a health clinic for the neighborhood poor and three group homes for women, where they are helped to find jobs and permanent living arrangements.

THESE UNDERTAKINGS share several fundamental principles. Insofar as it is possible, they reduce the need for shelter rather than perpetuate it. They attack both institutional and welfare dependency with strong doses of old-fashioned practical self-help. They are small and admittedly selective, recognizing that homelessness can't be effectively treated as long as people are being housed in vast warehouses, or as long as it is considered a mere matter of "mattresses on the floor."

The Steinbrucks emphasize that the most fragile of their charges—the women, most of them mentally ill, who spend each night on the floor of their chapel—would be better served at St. Elizabeth's mental hospital, where at least they would be safe. One woman was assaulted on the steps of the Luther Place Church. Another, 80 years old, was beaten while she was out on the streets. Erna Steinbruck says, "Some of them can't make a decision for their own well-being. But St. E's doesn't want them; it wants to get them out." One night recently a schizophrenic woman was sent from The District of Columbia General Hospital to St. Elizabeth's to the streets because no psychiatrist had been willing to sign an involuntary committal form and she herself couldn't cope with the paperwork. She showed up at Luther Place the next morning.

Still, the Steinbrucks have shown an adroitness at coaxing casseroles and clothing from their parishioners and neighbors; at convincing students to staff their group homes and doctors to work in their clinic; and at negotiating the complex of city welfare offices, zoning ordinances, police emergency units, and the recalcitrant mental health system. They have had less success with the biggest proponent of voluntarism: Ronald Reagan. The most the Steinbrucks have received from the administration is a few consultations with Harvey Vieth, the chairman of the Federal Task Force on the Homeless, and a visit from some of the cabinet wives, who stopped by one day at Christmastime laden with toiletries for the women.

Some of the solutions for the homeless will not be cheap or politically popular. But the Community of Hope, the St. Francis Residences, and Luther Place have demonstrated that providing for the majority of the homeless need not entail hiding them away. Neither passive acceptance of places "fit for vermin and trash" nor calls for a return to custodial care are the only ways out of this quandary. They are simply the least imaginative. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Civilization and Its Malcontents

Lost in America
(Warner Bros.)

Tartuffe
(Gaumont)

The theme of Getting Away from It All wasn't invented in America, but it might as well have been. At least since *Walden*, Americans have been a bit haunted by guilt for not living in raw nature and for doing work that might possibly make money. Two recent films are right in that line. *The Mean Season* is a crime thriller enclosed in the frame of a Miami reporter's determination to break loose from big-city success and become a small-town editor in Colorado. But we won't talk about *The Mean Season*. It isn't badly made, but the script's idiocies sink it beneath discussion.

The other is *Lost in America*, the latest comedy from an amusing troublemaker named Albert Brooks. The first two features he wrote and directed and starred in, *Real Life* and *Modern Romance*, established him as a volubly but gently disturbing exposer of sillinesses. His new film—Monica Johnson is co-author this time—is about that recurrent *Walden* guilt, particularly in males, particularly males who see themselves trapped on the escalator of success. *Lost in America* isn't as pungent as it might be: the dialogue has flaccid patches; the story just goes on for a while, then knocks off rather than concludes. But two elements give it some charm. First, its ease. Lately most American films have seemed to be spinoffs of MTV or about raunchy teenagers or both. Brooks floats amiably.

Second, the ironies. They begin early. Number one: Brooks doesn't have an overwhelming impulse to get away from the hurly-burly; he quits because the hurly-burly lets him down. He's a whiz in a Los Angeles advertising agency, so sure of a promotion that he has made a payment on a new house and is pricing a big Mercedes. Instead of promotion, the boss offers him a sideways move, transfer to New York. He quits, browned off by disappointment in business rather than by surfeit of it. He convinces his wife, the somewhat wispy Julie Hagerty, that they should liquidate their assets—they can put together about two hundred thou—buy a motor van, and go out into America and live. Really live real life. As he says, "Touch Indians."

They are in for surprises, we know, the sort that await hyped-up sophisticates who think that life is any realer one place than another. But one surprise suprises us, too: Hagerty has a gambling obsession. (Surprising, too, that Brooks didn't know this after eight years of marriage, but let it pass.) They reach Las Vegas, and one night while Brooks is sleeping, Hagerty goes to the roulette table and blows their entire bankroll. This puts their quest for innocence in jeopardy—and adds another irony. Their pastoral simplicity depends on their big-city bucks. Plus the irony that, chasing pastoral purity though they are, when they get to a money-dripping place, Hagerty can't resist the chance to scoop up some of it.

They are now broke. Simplicity begins to look threadbare. In an Arizona town, they get jobs in order to eat. He can't quite find anything in his $100,000 range, so he takes a crossing-guard job at $5.50 an hour. She goes to work in a fast-food joint.

This is more truth than they had bargained for. They can't stand it. They scoot for New York, where, by eating humble pie (not the term he uses), he gets the job he had spurned in L.A. Nothing, not even the closing titles, tells us that they have Learned from their experience, that at least they now have a shrine of pristine memory in their hearts. They are just glad to be back in the Madison Avenue rat race (which, as any farmer or village storekeeper could tell them, is only one form of the rat race).

This is the film's last, best ironic truth. *Lost in America* strikes a small, if not quite sharp enough, blow at the sentimentalities about the superiority of country over city, moral and otherwise, the superiority of subsistence over comfort. I wonder how long that big-time reporter in *The Mean Season* lasted in Colorado, how contentedly. Brooks and wife are not morally superior to anybody outside New York, but at least now they know they are not arbitrarily inferior, and the United States has two narcotic addicts fewer.

So many foreign film festivals are always running in New York, promoted by foreign governments, that I'm lucky to see a few in any one series. I feel especially lucky that I managed to see *Tartuffe* during its one-day engagement in the current French festival. It's the best *Tartuffe* I've seen and, as film, an act of daring.

Apparently Gerard Depardieu played the title role in a production of the Molière play by the National Theater of Strasbourg, directed by Jacques Lasalle. Then it was decided to film the produc-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

1984. In a gray-green world, streaked with different blacks, John Hurt (Winston Smith) and Richard Burton (O'Brien) fulfill the core of Orwell's tortured book. (Reviewed 2/4/85)

A Passage to India. David Lean, a master of middle-road cinema, does considerable honor to Forster's masterwork, aided by a generally sterling cast. (1/21/85)

Tchao Pantin. A murder drama built on character, something like Simenon. A young Parisian drug pusher and an older filling-station attendant become friends. One is killed, the other avenges. Better atmosphere than plot. (3/11/85)

Witness. Into the Amish world, peaceful and sturdy, a gory crime story intrudes. The lovely setting and Kelly McGillis, lovely in herself, exalt the plotty plot. (2/18/85)

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tion with Depardieu repeating his performance. He also made his directorial debut with the film—or more exactly, adapted the Strasbourg production to film. (Some of it was actually shot on the Strasbourg stage, though this is not visible.) Depardieu wasn't breaking new ground by attempting to make a true film of a theater production, but it's still dangerous territory. With the aid of a superb acting company, himself included, Depardieu succeeded.

THE THEATER production itself was obviously in some ways untraditional. Orgon's house is of the right period, but it is almost unfurnished. The walls are bare; only a few benches—and the table needed for the exposure scene—are all we see. Sometimes, in conversation, the actors even sink onto the floor, as on theater-in-the round stages. They are appropriately (and excellently) costumed, so the net effect is to make the production abstract without sundering it from period and place. The action is kept contained in small compass, which I'd guess was true on the Strasbourg stage, and the lighting is designed to make the groups look sculptured. My one reservation about his procedure is not that, on film, it makes the work look stagy or like early TV, but because the compression seems designed to make the actors turn inward, to delve deeply, to darken the play's colors. *Tartuffe*, as every student knows, is a *comédie de caractère*; this treatment almost pulls it down into the colors of Racine. The only really comic scene in the film is the quarrel between the young lovers, Mariane and Valère. This is usually a bore, one of those scenes where there's a lovers' squabble just so that they can make up. Here, contradictorily, the intensity takes the quarrel out of tedious old-comedy gavotte into the passionately ridiculous. But most of the production is far from *comédie*.

Depardieu, looking like a barefaced Rasputin, makes the pietistic opportunist into a steel blade. To see this performance after (only one other example) his Danton in Wajda's film is to see a born actor coming into his birthright. His wife, Elisabeth Depardieu, plays Elmire, Tartuffe's attempted prey, with fluency and warmth. François Perier, a welcome presence in French (and Italian) films since 1938, plays Orgon with grave, quiet force. All the cast persuade us yet again that, in France, acting competence usually includes competence in

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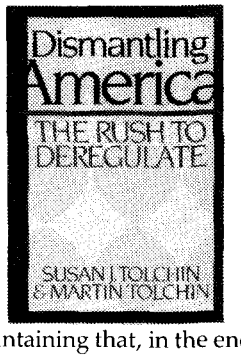

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the classic as well as the contemporary vein.

André Bazin says, in "Theater and Cinema," that "a play whether classic or modern is unassailably protected by its text. There is no way of adapting the text without . . . substituting something else, which may be better but is not the play." Bazin had his doubts about Molière on film, but this version might have swayed him: none of the "forest of painted canvas" that he feared (and which some Comédie Française films have been loaded with). Here these marvelous actors, with their enthralling voices and strong, musical readings, erect the text as a structure within which a *film* happens. I don't discount the deft editing and lighting when I say that Depardieu places his filmic bet on Molière's text and his actor colleagues—and wins. Perhaps the reason that I've never really liked Shakespeare on film is that I've never seen a Shakespeare film that placed so much cinematic reliance on the author.

I hope that this *Tartuffe* will at least have other special engagements, then will be made available in cassette and 16mm forms.

EDWARD ROTHSTEIN ON MUSIC

George Gershwin's Heav'nly Lan'

In the early 1930s, while Jacob Gershwine, a composer of various hit show tunes and concert pieces, was expressing interest in musically adapting a novel about Negroes in Charleston, South Carolina, Asa Yoelson inquired about the same book. Yoelson thought Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II might help turn the tragic tale into a musical. DuBose Heyward, the book's author, turned Yoelson down; he was not too enthused about having his story, based on "Goat Sammy," the Negro beggar, done in blackface, as Yoelson was proposing. But a few years later, Gershwine came down to Charleston to observe the lives and music of the Gullah Negroes, and Heyward was won over. Gershwine's *Porgy and Bess* made it to Broadway in 1935.

It may have been no accident that men like Yoelson and Gershwine (whose father was born Gershovitz) were so interested in the story of Porgy and Bess. At the end of the familiar musical adaptation, the crippled beggar Porgy heads off with his goat and cart to find Bess in New York. Gershwine, Yoelson, and their colleagues—Billy Rosenberg, Israel Baline, and others—were not crippled, and they did not use a goat cart, but their journey was also laborious. It began in Lower East Side versions of Catfish Row, and ended in what must have been for them all a "long, long road" to a "Heav'nly Lan' "—the heart of popular commercial musical life in America, known as Tin Pan Alley. The Jews of Tin Pan Alley changed their names to fit their urban and urbane characters, just as the opera's slick character "Sportin' Life" had left his more traditional moniker behind, when setting out for "dat high life in New York." Billy Rosenberg became Billy Rose. Israel Baline became Irving Berlin. Asa Yoelson became Al Jolson. And Jacob Gershwine—in case it hasn't already become clear—Jacob Gershwine, a.k.a. Gershvin/Gershovitz, became George Gershwin.

Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* was also the composer's attempt to accomplish another transformation, one which had been evident in his work during the years before. He sought to move from Tin Pan Alley to the high-art tradition, from the Broadway musical to what Gershwin called an "American folk opera." "If I am successful," he wrote, "it will resemble a combination of the drama and romance of *Carmen* and the beauty of *Meistersinger*. . . ." *Porgy and Bess* anxiously yearns for that world, the composer's own Heav'nly Lan'. Gershwin was out to prove that he was not Sportin' Life, selling out character and soul for "happy dust" and happy tunes, that he was, in fact, a Porgy, full of pain and sensibility. Gershwin was intent on this aesthetic ambition for a decade after "Rhapsody in Blue" (1924), and was becoming so successful that he had even been approached to write an opera for the Metropolitan Opera. Before thinking about *Porgy* he had considered another "ethnic" subject closer to home, but no less concerned with themes of desire in exile: Ansky's Yiddish play *The Dybbuk*.

GERSHWIN'S *Porgy* was not, however, a great success. It made it only as far as Broadway's Alvin Theater in 1935, where it received 124 performances; Gershwin spent his $10,000 in royalties paying the copyists. In later revivals, recitatives were cut along with some of the libretto and the music. The work maintained a small, if controversial, reputation as a serious work of American theater, while criticism of the work ranged from the musical to the racial.

The first major change in that status occurred in 1976, when the Houston Grand Opera treated the recitatives and musical demands seriously, taking the work away from Broadway theatricals and placing it in the opera house, and when London records released, that same year, the first uncut recording of the work led by Lorin Maazel and the Cleveland Orchestra (OSA 13116). And this season *Porgy and Bess* has made its final step "uptown" at the Metropolitan Opera, where it is being offered in a new $800,000 production. All 16 performances were sold out before the vast publicity machinery could even begin its work. And with James Levine conducting, Simon Estes as Porgy, Grace Bumbry as Bess, Nathaniel Merrill directing, and the Met going out of its roster to hire 70 members of an all-black chorus who were auditioned for their operatic abilities—this was clearly an attempt to firmly establish the work as serious opera.

Still, it is an irony of cultural politics in contemporary America that such revivals as Houston's (which crossed cultural boundaries and also appeared at the Radio City Music Hall) and the Met's had to wait for the fading away of black nationalist passions of the 1960s. They had condemned the work as racist, with fake dialect, caricatures, sentiment, and "Uncle Tom" attitudes. What was a white Jewish man doing, after all, writing an opera about blacks in the South, which included two murders, cocaine in abundance, African drum beats, ersatz jazz melodies, spirituals, a heroine who knows no sexual restraint, and such lyrics as "Doo-da O Wa-do-wa" and "Today I is gay an' I's free,/ Jes' abubblin', nothin' troublin' me"? Even in 1953, when Leontyne

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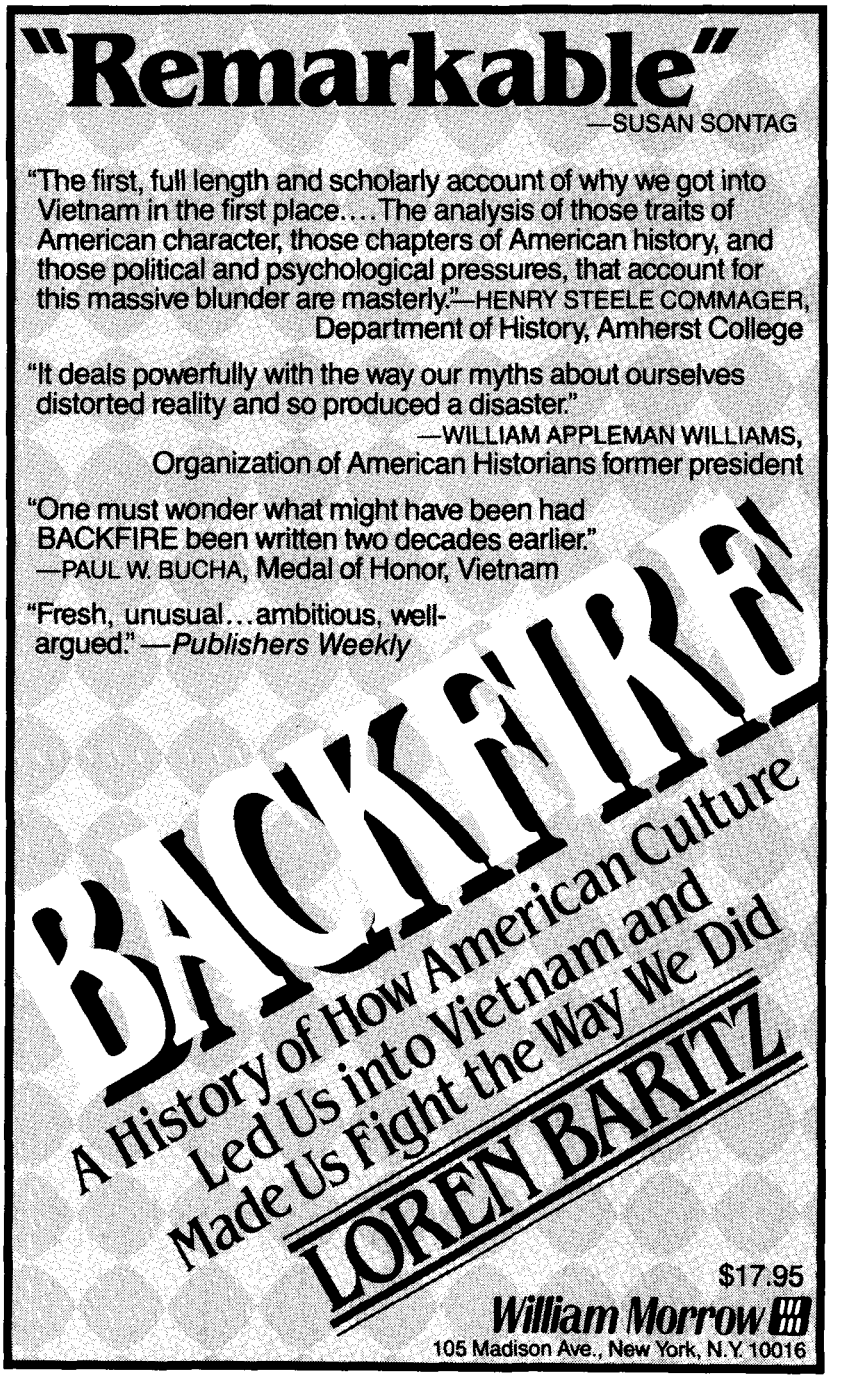
Price was touring as Bess (for a time under the sponsorship of the State Department), one black writer wrote that *Porgy* was "the most insulting, the most libelous, the most degrading act that could possibly be perpetrated against colored Americans of modern times."

But so far have cultural and racial attitudes changed in the last decade, that it would now be considered racist not to put on *Porgy*, not to take it seriously as an image of Negro life in the South, where white Coroners and Detectives and Policemen intrude on the communal life of Catfish Row. It is clear, for example, that *Porgy* has been welcomed to the Met so energetically in part because the event is taken to be a racial celebration: the work has "made it" into the opera house just as Simon Estes and Grace Bumbry have. There is a parallel aesthetic welcome involved: the work's avid invocation of black folk music and its pop extravagances of the Broadway musical have made it into the high-art arena, just as (without any racial overtones) the New York City Opera has decided to devote a large part of its season to revivals of Broadway musicals. This is another sort of "making it."

The Washington Post even greeted the appearance of *Porgy and Bess* at the Met with an editorial, welcoming its induction into the opera house. But so inverted has racial thinking become in recent years that in addition to welcoming the work, the *Post* expressed caution about the tradition of using all-black casts (such as were also used, for example, in Virgil Thomson's work of the same era, *Four Saints in Three Acts*). The *Post* wrote: "For blacks, whites, Orientals, a suspension of race-consciousness and an end to typecasting is in order." *Porgy* should be open to all—presumably done in blackface, much as Oriental makeup is used in productions of *Turandot*. Such a "suspension of race-consciousness" would involve as much of an increased awareness of race as an avoidance of it.

THE RACIAL issue in the response to *Porgy* is, in fact, more complex right now than it ever was at the time of the work's composition. But *Porgy* has primarily been written about and talked about as if it had nothing to do with race at all, as if it would be bad manners to address these issues seriously once it had been determined that *Porgy* was not racist in intent, but indeed quite liberal; and certainly once it had "made it." "Race-consciousness," though, is at this work's very heart. It complicates our reaction to this work as much as the strictly aesthetic issue of welcoming aspiring pop-culture into the ranks of operatic grandeur.

In fact, despite the praise that the production and performance have received, there is a constant gnawing consciousness that one of the main points of the staging and the singing is that we in the majestic Metropolitan Opera House are experiencing it at all: the fact of this performance of *Porgy* seemed, quite self-consciously, the main interest to be had. The main set of Catfish Row was directly inspired by the original 1935 production; only, as one wag noted, why was all the Negroes' clothing so immaculate and stylish and colorful when the shutters on the houses looked like they had just been through a typhoon? A sense of dramatic casualness but determined theatricality seemed a hallmark of the production, which was so poorly enunciated, even given the dialect, that several people attempted to follow the libretto in the dark. Simon Estes was in fine vocal condition, but he left Porgy a cipher; Grace Bumbry was cold, dramatically stilted, going into Porgy's hut at one moment a tortured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soul, at the next, an unrepentant tramp. The focus came from the animal physicality of Gregg Baker's Crown, Porgy's dark shadow, who kills and caresses and curses with as much ease as he leaps like a leopard from a balcony. Also providing some coherence were the occasional Sammy Davis Jr. manners of Charles Williams—making a sleek American debut as Sportin' Life, the serpentine operator who undermines Bess's love for Porgy with a few snorts of "happy dust." The Met, instead of understating Gershwin's Broadway extravagances—that formulaic finale as Porgy sings to the audience, "I'm on my way to a Heav'nly Lan'," for example, or the fake cadences that are meant to be "dramatic"—actually overstated them, making the choral prelude to the big picnic scene seem like something out of *The Music Man*, complete with a red banner proclaiming "Repent." And the storm scene was overblown—literally and musically—pressured like much of Mr. Levine's conducting.

The tone, that is, was uncertain and celebratory. I think this uncertainty derived partly from the score itself, but also from the earnest desire to elevate this score for a new home, to weight it with drama when it would have been better left to speak for itself, to treat it "uncut," or to take it seriously at its most extravagant rather than at its most subtle. Virgil Thomson, attacking George Gershwin in 1935, in what still must be the most astute appraisal of his achievement, ascribed the score's difficulties to Gershwin's own failures, his "oversophisticated commercial background," in which ingenuity is developed out of proportion to the expressive possibilities of the music. The "hokum" in the score, he argued, was also partly due to the nature of the subject itself: "With a libretto that should never have been accepted on a subject that should never have been chosen, a man who should never have attempted it has written a work that has considerable power."

BUT WHAT is this power—a power that did at times break through the Met's often uninspired production? Why is this a "subject that should never have been chosen"? And what is it that makes it so difficult to respond to this work, with its mixture of race and Broadway-manners? When George Gershwin and Al Jolson were contemplating setting *Porgy*, such questions would have themselves seemed peculiar. Pulitzer Prize-winning plays of the period were Paul Green's *In Abraham's Bosom* and Marc Connelly's *The Green Pastures; Showboat* came to Broadway in 1927; and Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* was even turned into opera. All of these works touched upon Negro life and culture; Negro music, in the form of jazz, was becoming a challenge in Paris as well as New York. Negro folk culture was being introduced into the newly developing American pop culture, and Jews, children of immigrants, were contributors to this transformation, spicing Negro culture, in turn, with elements of Jewish culture and music. (This "collaboration," often far from conscious, extended into the Brill Building rock 'n' roll of the 1950s and 1960s.)

THE JEWS—whether on Broadway or Hollywood or the vaudeville stage—were as instrumental in their influence on pop culture of the period as they were on the more severe forms of European high culture. In part, Jewish performers learned to speak of themselves through the voices of others rather than as Jews, just as Gershwin and Jolson, in their different ways, took on the accents of the black man. Charles Schwartz, in his biography of Gershwin, shows how Gershwin's song " 'S Wonderful" begins as Goldfaden's Yiddish song, "Noach's Teive"—Noah's ark. Such biblical themes of trial and redemption were those of Negro folk culture as well, and were translated, often crudely, into popular American culture, the passions and references becoming more diluted with each passing generation. *Guys and Dolls*, for example, may be considered a distant descendant of *Porgy and Bess*—Negro spirituals become prayer meetings of the Salvation Army; the Negro folk characters with their shades of virtue and vice literally move to Broadway, their crap game growing in size; the heroine is homogenized, her conflict between religious propriety and desire tamed and modified; the cripple is turned into "Sky Masterson"—a masterly hero in the Hollywood mold. Such commercial transformation of folk material is a hallmark of American pop culture.

Still, it hardly makes it profound art, and Gershwin's *Porgy* remains someplace in the middle, between the folk cultures that influenced him and the pop cultures that were his heirs, fraught all the while with the ambitions of the European high-art tradition. Any opera-house performance has to pay those ambitions heed, even when they fail; and that means taking the other elements seriously. The folk and racial elements of the work, far from being accidental to its theme, are essential to it—more essential, indeed, than the details of its awkward plot. This is a "folk opera" in part because its focus is the community of Catfish Row, down to its Honeyman, Strawberry woman, and Devil crab dealer, all of whom chant traditional sales chants Gershwin heard in Charleston. In this the opera is authentically convincing: songs such as "Long Pull to Get There" or "Summertime" take on folk character and are expressive of a general communal condition; songs such as "Bess, You Is My Woman Now" and "I Got Plenty O Nothin," concerning the particular and personal, slip into the Broadway idiom.

The conflict between these two worlds can even be read as a theme of *Porgy*. In one of the most astute essays on the work, Wilfred Mellers in *Music in a New Found Land*, found in the opera "the impact of the world of commerce [Broadway, Tin Pan Alley, Sportin' Life] on those who once led, would like to have led, may still lead, the 'good life' [Porgy, Bess, Gershwin]." Mellers is a bit contentious about the evils of commerce, but he defines the nature of the Romance in *Porgy* quite clearly. Heyward's novel, for example, begins: "Porgy lived in a Golden Age. Not the Golden Age of a remote and legendary past . . . but an age when men, not yet old, were boys in an ancient, beautiful city that time had forgotten before it destroyed." And in that mythic time, Porgy was "waiting, waiting with the concentrated intensity of a burning glass."

Gershwin's revision of the story is to take that longing of the characters—a longing that can be found not merely in the name of Sportin' Life and Crown, but in the composer's own Americanized name—and show, awkwardly, but not without dramatic and musical skill, how it dissolved the communal family and religious life of Catfish Row. The prayer meetings, the family laboring for its child, the loyalty of the community when faced with the outsider—all fall prey to the animal desires of Crown on the one hand, and the New York-imported style of Sportin' Life and happy dust on the other. Crown is the prehistoric past of this golden age;

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Sportin' Life, its urban, far from golden future. Mellers is sharp here: he talks about the dissolution of this golden age, within the music.

That theme had to speak directly to the Jewish children of immigrants as well, and can be found, in different forms, in the pop culture of the period. *Porgy and Bess* is a myth of the pre-urban life of the Negro. The novel ends with Porgy, an old saddened man, in Catfish Row, having lost his Bess to New York. But Gershwin wanted a happy ending. Porgy finds Bess gone, gets his goat and his cart, and heads off to New York: "I'm on my way to a Heav'nly Lan'/I'll ride dat long, long road." The music is sheer Broadway, unconvincing celebratory spectacle. And in retrospect it makes us anxious: it goes against the pastoral sentiment of the drama, but also alludes to a future devoutly wished for, but long since lost.

It may be that our response to *Porgy*—having passed through crude arguments over its "Uncle Tom" attitudes—is now caught in a moment of Romance, when we do not know how to respond to its black folk invocations, its Broadway style, its high-art ambitions—or to its currently unmentioned origins in parallel myths of a generation of American Jews. The temptation, as in the Met's *Porgy and Bess*, is for simple, striking answers: theatrics and prestige without complication. It ain't necessarily so.

THE FALL OF AFRICA

The First Dance of Freedom: Black Africa in the Post-war Era by Martin Meredith

(Harper and Row, 412 pp., $23.95)

The title of Martin Meredith's book is taken from one of Lord Byron's *Detached Thoughts* of 1821-22. "I sometimes wish I was the Owner of Africa; to do at once what Wilberforce will do in time, viz—sweep Slavery from her desarts, and look on upon the first dance of their Freedom." When Byron wrote, of course, most of black Africa was, in a sense, "free": that is, it was not—with the exception of fairly small coastal enclaves—ruled by powers from outside the continent. Most of Africa between the Sahara and the Cape was under the control of indigenous despotisms. Very much as now, in fact, except that the boundaries of the new despotisms are those established in the colonial period, less than 100 years ago and more than 60 years after Byron wrote those words.

Byron was not thinking of freedom in the modern sense of national independence—what "nations" in Africa, then? He was talking about going in there, to free slaves: "I sometimes wish I was the Owner of Africa. . . . " The poet, in fact, was already in the grip of one of the urges that went into the making of colonialism: the urge to go in there and clean the place up, for the benefit of its unfortunate people.

Mr. Meredith, as is his privilege, is using the poet's words in a sense that the poet could not have intended. Mr. Meredith's point is that the "dance of freedom"—in the sovereign independence of African states—has turned out to be, on the whole, a macabre fiasco. The last paragraph in his book runs:

> The predictions made in the 1980s about Africa's future were increasingly gloomy. No solution to its myriad problems seemed available. Experts like the French agronomist René Dumont spoke only in pessimistic terms: "Most of the countries of tropical Africa, with one or two exceptions, are up to their ears in debt, without any hope of ever being able to repay what they owe," he said. "Twenty years after independence these countries are in reality bankrupt, reduced to a state of permanent beggary." The World Bank noted in a 1983 report that despite billions of dollars of international aid poured into Africa, the region faced "a deepening crisis." A study published by the Economic Commission for Africa in 1983, attempting to look twenty-five years ahead, made particularly chilling reading. It predicted that on existing trends poverty in rural areas

William D. Snider

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would reach "unimaginable dimensions," while the towns would suffer increasingly from crime and destitution. "The picture that emerges," it said, "is almost a nightmare."

Mr. Meredith is a reporter with long experience of post-independence Africa. He writes without polemical intent, and I think that, like several others who write about Africa, he would wish that things were different from what he has to report that they are. Where there is a bright side, he gladly acknowledges it.

> The advances that Africa made in those circumstances were remarkable. In the two decades between 1960 and 1980, school enrolment grew faster in Africa than in any other developing region. At primary level, enrolment increased from thirty-six per cent to sixty-three per cent of the age group; at secondary level, it increased from three to thirteen per cent; universities produced thousands of graduates each year. A World Bank study published in 1981 observed: "The African record is unique; nowhere else has a formal education system been created on so broad a scale in so short a time." In the field of medical care, similar improvements were recorded. Child death rates fell from thirty-eight to twenty-five per thousand; life expectancy increased from thirty-nine to forty-seven years; the numbers of medical and nursing personnel per capita doubled, despite a large increase in the population. New infrastructures were built at record-breaking pace: ports, railways, roads and buildings. The number of miles covered by all-weather roads tripled, opening up vast areas of the interior for the first time.

But the darkness surrounding these bright patches is awesome:

> Despite these achievements, the magnitude of the problems facing Africa proved overwhelming. Economic growth in much of the continent was slow. In the first two decades, per capita income in nineteen countries increased by less than one per cent a year; in the 1970s it actually fell in fifteen countries. Output per person rose more slowly than in any other part of the world. In many countries agricultural production declined sharply, making them dependent on foreign food supplies. The population meanwhile expanded at one of the fastest rates in the world. As African governments embarked on one development project after another, they accumulated huge and unmanageable debts. During the 1970s many were beset by severe economic crises, threatening to undermine what progress had been made. Hospitals and clinics ran short of medicines; schools lacked textbooks; factories closed through lack of raw materials or spare parts for machinery. Even when the accomplishments were taken into account, Africa remained perilously far behind other areas of the world. Life expectancy was by far the lowest of any region in the world, still twenty-seven years shorter than in industrialised countries and less than in any other developing region. The African child death rate in 1980 was sixty-seven per cent greater than in South Asia, three times higher than in Latin America, and twenty-five times higher than in the developed world. The African population was more exposed to endemic diseases like malaria and to other diseases stemming from poor sanitation, malnutrition and poverty. In the field of education, the advances made were still limited: in about one third of African countries, less than half of the child population received primary education; in only six countries were more than twenty per cent of the age group in secondary school.

ON THE whole (there are exceptions) the failure of the polities has matched the failure of the economies; and the twin failures merge. Ghana, the most advanced of all the territories of colonial Africa, and the first to gain its independence, is today in economic ruin, apprehensively and incompetently guarded by a puritanical military dictatorship. And Ghana has been lucky, compared with some. Everyone knows about the horrors of Idi Amin's Uganda. What is less well known is that the people of Uganda are just as terrorized now as they were in his day. The only difference is that whereas terror in Amin's day was a centralized institution, terror today is dispersed, meted out by various bands of armed brigands, in or out of government uniform.

The continent is crawling with dictators, sane and insane. Hastings Banda in Malawi: "Anything I say is law. Literally law. It is a fact in this country." Jean-Bedel Bokassa, in 1977, declared an empire in the Central African Republic, "and himself Emperor of its two million subjects. The following year, using as a model the ceremony in which Napoleon had crowned himself Emperor of France in 1804, he arranged for his own coronation. No expense was spared. From France, Bokassa ordered all the trappings of monarchy: a crown of diamonds, rubies and emeralds; an imperial throne, fifteen feet high, shaped like a golden eagle; thoroughbred horses; carriages; coronation robes; brass helmets and breastplates for the Imperial Guard; and tons of food, wine, fireworks and flowers for the festivities. To the strains of Mozart and Beethoven, mixed with the throb of tribal drums, Bokassa duly crowned himself Emperor in Bangui's sports stadium on the mosquito-infested banks of the Oubangui river. The cost, amounting to $22 million, was nearly equivalent to one quarter of the entire national revenue for the previous year."

Malawi and the Central African Republic (or Empire) are small and poor states, but big, rich ones have not always been more fortunate in their rulers. Joseph-Désiré Mobutu in Zaire (the former Belgian Congo):

> In time, Mobutu accumulated vast personal power, appropriating at will government revenues, deciding on all appointments and promotions and ruling by decree. The personality cult which surrounded him became all-pervasive. He assumed grand titles like "Guide" and "Messiah." His deeds were endlessly praised in songs and dances; officials took to wearing lapel badges with his miniature portrait. The television news was preceded by the image of the president descending, as it were, through the clouds from heaven.

THE FAILURE of the polities and the failure of the economies are linked, partly because of the crippling cost of megalomania and arbitrary power, but also because, even in relatively benign cases, the political class helps itself to a wildly disproportionate share of the national income. René Dumont—who was the first to diagnose, back in the early sixties, that "black Africa is off to a bad start"—has written about the political superstructure of the small Francoplane of the West African state of Gabon (once the abode of Albert Schweitzer):

> As for the cost of the Gabonese presidency, parliament and ministers, with all their supposedly useful trips, it probably represents, in relation to the national income of the country, more than the cost to France of the court of Louis XVI in 1788.

Unfortunately in Africa such conditions have generated not social revolutions but military coups, which generally (though not always) make no difference, except that there are more uniforms around on those expensive state occasions.

Mr. Meredith thinks that it also makes no difference whether the state chooses a capitalist road or a socialist road or any other ideological road. He writes:

> What was so striking about Africa's plight was its universality. Whatever economic

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and political system was devised, whatever ideology was chosen, the same pattern of economic crisis developed.

I dissent from this view, and I can find a good deal of support for my dissent in the pages of Mr. Meredith's book. Not all the capitalist African states have been successful, but all the (relatively) successful states have been capitalist. "African socialism" has no success stories to tell. I say this not because I wish to make a fashionable Reaganite point, but simply because it is true, and important.

Mr. Meredith tells of a meeting at Abidjan in April 1957 between Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, then in the pristine glory of the presidency of the first of the newly independent African states, and Félix Houphouet-Boigny, the leading politician of the neighboring Ivory Coast. Nkrumah was a proud African socialist, already dreaming of a united socialist Africa under his leadership. Houphouet-Boigny was a cautious politician committed to cooperation with France; his Ivory Coast became independent, in association with France, three years later. As Mr. Meredith tells the story of that meeting between the two West African leaders in the dawning period of African independence:

> Houphouet feigned indifference to Ghana's independence, predicting that in ten years the Ivory Coast, with the assistance of France, would have surpassed its neighbour Ghana in economic and social progress. Between them a wager was made to see who turned out to be right. "You are witnessing the start of two experiments," Houphouet told his compatriots.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Meredith refrains (oddly) from acknowledging the fact, Houphouet won that wager hands down. The Ivory Coast and its neighbor Ghana started out more or less level, around 1960, but the Ivory Coast is now the most flourishing economy in tropical Africa. As Mr. Meredith records:

> In the 1950s, the Ivory Coast produced a single crop, coffee. The government encouraged diversification, guaranteed profitable prices for major cash crops, provided extension services and a marketing organisation. Private enterprise was given free rein. New crops were developed under the direction of parastatal companies. Between 1960 and 1980 agricultural production tripled. The Ivory Coast overtook Ghana as the world's largest producer of cocoa; it became Africa's largest exporter of coffee and a major exporter of pineapples, bananas, palm oil and hardwood; and at the same time it managed to increase food production at a higher rate than population growth.

Mr. Meredith's index entry under "Ghana" provides a succinct guide to the progress of the rival "experiment."

> Ghana
> collapse of cocoa production, 1965-79, 356;
> history: name chosen for old Gold Coast colony, 91; independence achieved, 1957, 93; economic and political strength on day of independence, 94; comes under Nkrumah's dictatorship, 188; ruinous industrialisation of, 189-90; financial confusion, 190-1; decline of agriculture, 191; corruption under Nkrumah, 191-2; fall in living standards by 1963, 192; political confusion, 192-3; made one-party state, 1964, 194; university purge, 1964, 194; huge cost of hosting OAU Conference, 1965, 196-7; coup of 1966 topples Nkrumah, 198, 238, 321; alternation of military and civilian governments since 1966, 238-9; economic plight, 1966-82, 238, 239

GUINEA, the Francophone West African state whose leader, Sekou Toure, chose Nkrumah's way, rather than Houphouet's, also ended up in economic ruin, amid socialist and anti-colonialist rhetoric.

In general, the socialism of African states turns out, in any particular case, to be either a racket or a facade. Let me consider, a little more closely, one case of the "racket" variety—Nkrumah's Ghana—and one of the "facade" variety—Nyerere's Tanzania.

I lived for three years (1962-65) in Nkrumah's Ghana, where I was vice chancellor of the University at Legon, near Accra. Nkrumah invited me to take the job, and I accepted, once I found that the facility of the university—both Ghanaian and foreign—also wanted me to take the job. I found Nkrumah's anti-colonialist record not unsympathetic at the time I went to Ghana, partly because I had just recently been politically clobbered by certain colonialists while I was on a U.N. mission in Katanga, Congo (which was mainly why Nkrumah had invited me). I was not particularly starry-eyed about Nkrumah; I expected him to be a despot, but thought he would be a fairly enlightened one. I was skeptical about Ghanaian socialism, but I did expect Nkrumah to be serious about trying to make it work, for the benefit of his people. What I found was different.

The first state occasion I attended in Ghana was the annual opening of parliament by Nkrumah. It was an imposing spectacle: the full panoply of Westminster, plus certain ceremonies associated with the formal appearances of the great chiefs of the Twi-speaking peoples. The parliamentary benches were lined with the members of Nkrumah's Convention People's Party, fat men all wearing the *kente*, the multicolored toga traditionally worn by Ashanti and Fanti of status.

Nkrumah read a prepared speech. Most of it was about Africa at large, but at one point he did get down to Ghanaian specifics. Ghanaians, he said, were not allowed to hold funds deposited in banks abroad. He said he knew that even certain members of parliament had infringed this rule. Still, he offered an amnesty to all who would repatriate their foreign currency holdings by a certain date. Those who continued to hold moneys to deposit abroad after that date would be severely penalized.

Throughout this entire passage of their president's speech, his entire parliament rocked with laughter. They found the bit about the amnesty and the bit about the penalties equally hilarious. And as the parliament laughed, the president was smiling.

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As we left the parliament building, I asked Alex Kwapong, my Ghanaian colleague and deputy at the university (later my successor, always my friend), what all that meant. He smiled and said: "If you stick around with us here for a while, you'll find out exactly what it means." And so I did. I found out, for example, what Ghana's gigantic Development Program meant. A senior Ghanaian civil servant told me why he was leaving:

> The Farmers Co-operative wanted currency and clearance to import 24 more tractors. I wanted to know just what use they had made of the last 24 tractors they imported. They wouldn't tell me, so on a hunch I went down to the harbor at Tema and found all 24 of them, rusting in the rain with their tyres flat.
>
> So I went to Nkrumah and told him about it. Nkrumah appeared to be shocked. He sent for the chairman of the Farmers Co-operative. I told my story in the presence of the two of them, and Nkrumah said to the chairman: "How do you explain this, Joe?"
>
> At that, Joe went on his knees in front of Nkrumah, and clutched Nkrumah's knees. He said: "Osagyefo"—Nkrumah's title—"if I ever let you down, you may hang me in the public square. Hang me in the public square!" Nkrumah lifted him up and embraced him, and that was that.

OF COURSE there is corruption in every state, and in every form of society. But Nkrumah's state was one huge rip-off. Note also that graft disguised as development is many times more expensive than just plain graft. Joe the socialist farm-boss was interested in his ten percent cut on every tractor imported. But the people of Ghana had to pay for ten times that cut, in the shape of tractors paid for but not used. Meanwhile favorable commentators from foreign parts cited the tractor-import statistics, one index of Ghana's dynamic expanding socialist economy.

I attended two more of Nkrumah's annual openings of parliament. Each of them contained the same homily about moneys deposited abroad, and each time it was greeted with the same laughter, followed by the same smile on the part of the homilist. The third such occasion for me—in 1965—was also the last for Nkrumah. He was ousted by military coup in February 1966. But Ghana has never made good the damage his regime inflicted on it. The main damage was not the direct cost of the waste, the reckless running down of the currency reserves. The main damage was the destruction of the most valuable part of Ghana's inheritance from the colonial days: its honest and competent civil service, the best in tropical Africa. But the honest and competent administrators had to be shoved aside, because they stood between Nkrumah's socialist cronies and the loot.

African-socialism-as-racket I came to know quite intimately, in my three years in Nkrumah's Ghana. African-socialism-as-facade I knew only from the outside (appropriately, in a way). I met Julius Nyerere during my Ghana days—I was representing the University of Ghana in Nairobi, at one of those mirage-like occasions so frequent in the history of postcolonial Africa. This was the opening ceremony of the supposed University of East Africa, a concept that was related to the alleged Federation of East Africa, consisting of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The E.A.F. was a phantom milestone on the road to the ultimate and most dazzling of all the mirages: African Unity.

At the E.A.F. dinner I found myself seated beside Nyerere. I think he had asked me to be put there because he wanted to pump me about the Congo, which he did. I found him very pleasant company. His charm of manner is well known. Kwame Nkrumah could be charming too, when he wanted to; but there was always a touch of godlike condescension in Nkrumah's charm. Nyerere, on the other hand, was down-to-earth and unassuming, talking like one human being to another. I found this a refreshing change, and wished I had had Julius to work with, instead of Kwame.

IN LATER years, when I visited Tanzania, I was impressed by the modesty of Nyerere's life-style, by the absence of palaces and other evidence of conspicuous consumption. I also heard much talk of Tanzanian socialism and the principle of *ujemaa*, "self-reliance." The cornerstone of the whole system, it seemed, was the *ujemaa* village: putatively a vaguely kibbutz-like affair, a matter of building and being built. On my last visit to Tanzania, at the end of the seventies, I made an effort to see some *ujemaa* villages. I had come to Dar-es-Salaam to interview Nyerere about Rhodesia (then in one of the crises of its mutation into Zimbabwe). Nyerere was traveling at the time, so I had a few days with time on my hands. I told Nyerere's secretary—a European woman—that I would like to see some *ujemaa* villages. I had assumed this would be a welcome request, but it wasn't. "What do you want to see *ujemaa* villages for?" she asked, with something like loathing in her voice. I said I understood these were the cornerstone of Tanzania's self-reliance development program. She made an appointment for me to see the minister for information.

EVEN though one of the main tasks of the minister for information was telling the world about *ujemaa* villages, he didn't seem too happy at finding himself face to face with someone anxious to look at some of these inspiring collectivities. He asked me how long I would be in Tanzania. I told him four or five days. "Then it is quite impossible. You know, you can't just go and *see* an *ujemaa* village. You have to give us time to, well time to organize some kind of manifestation." Even the famous Potemkin, Catherine the Great's equivalent of a minister for information, needed a little time before he could provide those idyllic "Potemkin Villages" that so edified the more trusting of the visitors to the czarina's dominions.

Ujemaa may be a bit of a joke, but at least—unlike Nkrumah's socialism—it is a harmless joke. The illusions it generates are even helpful, to some extent. Paradoxically, "self-reliance" is a great begetter of foreign aid. Mr. Meredith is very good on this.

> Much was achieved during Tanzania's independence, notably in the field of education, health and social services. Between 1960 and 1980, primary school enrolment increased from one quarter of the school-age population to ninety-five per cent; adult literacy grew from ten percent to seventy-five per cent; four in ten villages were provided with clean tap water, three in ten had clinics; life expectancy increased from 41 years to 51 years; only half as many children—18 in 100—died before the age of four. Yet what progress was made was financed largely by foreign aid. During the 1970s, Tanzania received no less than $3 billion, mostly from the West. The level of aid increased from $10 million in 1967 to $600 million in 1982, when as much as two thirds of the development budget was derived from foreign funds and grants. Nyerere's achievement, therefore, was related not to the success of his strategy for improving the economic and social welfare of his countrymen, but to his ability to persuade foreign sponsors that his objectives were sincere.

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Socialism, real or imaginary, is something exotic in Africa: a fad of Westernized elites. The market, on the other hand, is indigenous, and readily comprehensible. Those regimes that interfere least with the market are those that are least alien to those over whom they rule. Houphouet was supposed to be the stooge of a foreign power; Nkrumah the proud, free African. Yet Houphouet made more sense to the people of the Ivory Coast than Nkrumah did to the people of Ghana. That is how Houphouet won his bet.

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN

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OF BOOKS AND THE MAN

Enlarging the Change: The Princeton Seminars in Literary Criticism, 1949-1951 by Robert Fitzgerald

(Northeastern University Press, 261 pp., $19.95)

"But are not those old occasions ghostly now? Have not those who took part in them faded into impalpability . . . ?" These are poignant questions for a classmate and colleague to read, in the preface to a volume that—as it turns out—has reached publication during the very month of the author's death. His characteristic answer is a qualified affirmation: "Yes and no. Ghostliness and permanence both are of the nature of good literature, and persons devoted to it partake of both. We have indeed seen changes of manners." Certainly Robert Fitzgerald will continue to be a presence, most widely felt through our most accessible translations of the three major classical epics. (It is not their least distinction that his Virgil sounds different from his Homer.) His uniquely discriminating ear for poetic effect, in his own and other languages, had also made him an ideal translator not only from Greek tragedy, but from such moderns as St. John Perse. That he was himself a gifted poet is manifest in the quality and individuality of the elegant lyrics he has left us, as they have been collected in *Spring Shade*.

Moreover, if we still have men of letters in this country, or anything like a literary community, it is thanks to such careers as Fitzgerald's. His gift for friendship, in journalistic days, made him a mentor for James Agee, Flannery O'Connor, and other fellow writers. Through his teaching years at Harvard and elsewhere, he discerned and fostered younger talents. He must indeed have seen a change of manners, in moving from *Time* magazine into "a fresh humanistic adventure," which could hardly have hoped for a more perceptive rapporteur. His last book consists essentially of his direct report, commissioned then by the Rockefeller Foundation, declassified a generation afterward, and published now with a certain amount of updating explanation. It is based upon full participation during the second year, and on a reconstruction of the first from partial attendance, relayed notes, and interviews. As "the writer," Fitzgerald engages and charms us with third-person Jamesian diffidence. Toward the interlocutors he is generous and sympathetic, personally if not always ideologically. His chronicle is all the richer because it so often discloses tastes and opinions, reservations, and pieties of his own.

The absorbing experiment to which it bears witness, and which has been successfully carried on into the present, inaugurated what have come to be known as the Gauss Seminars—after a warmly remembered dean who played a helpful part in the original sessions. It may be significant that the scene was Princeton, a somewhat more aloof and rarefied setting than Harvard or Yale would have been, and therefore probably more fallow ground for such colloquies. The Institute for Advanced Studies, recently settled nearby, had imported a cosmopolitan note by welcoming scientists out of the great European diaspora. Having sponsored a pilot course by Kenneth Burke, it was expected to collaborate with the university in sponsoring the seminars. But, despite the interest shown by its director, J. Robert Oppenheimer, it seems gradually to have withdrawn from joint patronage of this project. That was a serious loss for interdisciplinary expectations. On the other hand it could be said that, within the sphere of literature itself at mid-century, artists and universities stood at some distance from one another, and the seminars did much by bringing them together.

This edgy coalition, as Fitzgerald reminds us, had been celebrated by R. P. Blackmur in an article entitled "A Featherbed for Critics." Blackmur had been brought to Princeton to assist Allen Tate in creative writing—the same arrangement that would bring Fitzgerald there as assistant to Francis Fergusson in 1950-51. Fergusson, the first director of the seminars, would be succeeded by Blackmur, even as the latter had succeeded Tate in the writing program. Tate and Fergusson both had far more professional credentials; yet neither was what Blackmur soon became, an academic politician and foundation diplomat. As a professor without a college degree, his position was ironically unique. It had been quite creditably grounded on pioneering studies in New Criticism, some of the earliest close readings of important American poets, written with the oblique penetration of a painstaking autodidact. His association with the colloquium encouraged him to pontificate, on the basis of a wider knowledge than he could control. Fitzgerald cites an essay on *Madame Bovary* that was prompted by such a discussion, but charitably forbears to point out that it begins and ends with mistakes in elementary French.

THE FIRST two years set the pattern: four seminars per year, six weekly meetings per seminar, an hour on each occasion for a paper, plus another hour for questioning and comment. The select audience, 20 to 30 invited listeners, would then become active participants. Some of them were drawn from the institute, such as Erwin Panofsky, others from Princeton's changing constellation of visiting writers, such as John

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Berryman, with differences of temperament and background that stimulated lively dialogue. Some members of the faculty attended, while certain others stayed away rather pointedly. (Such regulars as Américo Castro and Erich Kahler were still attending, much to my gratification, when I presented a series of papers in 1961.) To conduct these eight conferences, Fergusson had lined up an exceptionally interesting and varied procession of spokesmen, who could speak for Europe and America, theory and practice, philosophy and theology, philology and history, poetry and fiction. Talk went "as the spirit spiraled," in Fitzgerald's phrase. If it did not pursue "that purposive logic that leads to decision," it did provide a showcase for work-in-progress, a sounding board for developing ideas.

THE auspicious point of departure served the additional purpose of introducing Erich Auerbach, "the superlatively good European" who had just arrived from the University of Istanbul. His magisterial sequence of textual analyses, *Mimesis*, had appeared in German three years before and would be brought out in English translation four years later by the Princeton University Press. His subtle explication of suggestive texts by Pascal, Baudelaire, and Flaubert was well devised to enkindle arguments here. As chance would have it, Ernst Robert Curtius, another grand master of *Romanistik*, was present, and the situation briefly savored of continental polemics. An American remonstrance was that Auerbach's stylistics, while proceeding with structural acumen from sentence to sentence, scanted "the organization of the whole." But his inspiration lasted into the second seminar—along perhaps with Burke's "dramatistic" concepts—when the director took his turn by interpreting the *Purgatorio*. Having underscored the ritualistic elements of drama in his notable *Idea of a Theatre*, Fergusson now went on to elicit the "histrionic" features of *The Divine Comedy*. The resulting book, *Dante's Drama of the Mind*, was worked out through a dialectical process.

This sense of interaction stands in marked contrast to the account of a subsequent contribution by René Wellek: a preview of chapters on Johnson, Lessing, and other leading figures ("lectures indeed") from the two forthcoming volumes of his monumental *History of Modern Criticism*. Fitzgerald shows due respect for Wellek's intelligence, but seems slightly put off by his learning, reductively alluding to footnotes, filing cards, and stacks. Though one may sympathize with an aversion to the pedantries of graduate study, it seems only fair to remember that Wellek's (and Austin Warren's) *Theory of Literature* was designed precisely to correct them, rather than to become "a *PMLA* to end all others."

FITZGERALD himself, in the following seminar, earnestly proposed to bridge the "discursive" and the "creative" attitudes, with Aristotelian support in epistemology and ethics as well as in poetics, and observations on the coalescence of *sophia* (wisdom) with *techne* (art). He was aware of the paradoxical hazards in defending and dignifying poetry by equating it with philosophy. Modestly and candidly he registers disagreements. He might have got further with his hearers by speaking more directly from the standpoint of the artist.

He might likewise have had the concurrence of the next—and for him the climactic—speaker, if Jacques Maritain had not been absent, immersed in the preparation of his own seminar. Certainly there is a continuity, reinforced by Hellenic and neo-Thomist authorities. As a religious apologist, Maritain had displayed a supple insight into all the nonscientific aspects of intellectual activity. His *Art and Scholasticism* (1920) had broken down earlier barriers between the Catholic tradition and the modernist esthetic. These new and more elaborate discourses would be further elaborated into his Mellon Lectures, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry* (1953), where distinct artistic and literary sensibilities are concretely framed at a high level of abstract generalization. A later generation of uncommitted readers may not feel the need or relevance of such ramifying conceptual apparatus. Fitzgerald reports that there was "almost no memorable interchange . . . between the philosopher and his listeners." It is not clear whether they were spellbound by a revelation or bemused by a language that was scarcely theirs. Yet Maritain, as the senior seminarist, could sustain a flair for universals and talk unabashedly about beauty.

Two of the first-year seminarists had been accomplished practitioners, yet they seem to have exercised less of an impact than their more theoretical colleagues. Delmore Schwartz may already have entered his unhappy second act. His subject was his concern, described by an auditor as "obsessive," with the circumstances of T. S. Eliot's career. In this case the reception, as Fitzgerald remarks, had the effect of arresting rather than fostering a book. Mark Schorer focused his expertise and experience on a dozen standard English novels. Despite the familiarity of the genre, its critical recognition—as a serious object of craftsmanship or a vehicle of moral consciousness—had been relatively belated. Henry James had given precept and example for a sophisticated conception of "the well-made novel," with its own technical terms and artistic criteria. Schorer could apply these retroactively and suggest some strategic revaluations. But Fitzgerald was frankly outraged to watch this progression lead up to D. H. Lawrence, in whom "an artist" had been spoiled by "a seer." For a seminar considering Jane Austen and George Eliot, or a first year that had dealt with Dante and Baudelaire, that was an anticlimax.

THE SECOND year, and the period covered by these annals, concluded with a symposium. As a test-case for methods and standards, it was agreed to discuss a current novel by "a man of letters of the heaviest calibre." Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* (1948) proved a highly discussable choice, admittedly "a valedictory fable of the artist's life and Germany together," problematic even within the canon of so consciously problematic a novelist. Fitzgerald is perfectly forthright in confessing a general bias, if not a blind spot. The six symposiasts, though open-minded enough, were nothing if not critical. (The present reviewer, who reviewed the work when it came out, was inclined to share some of their doubts.) The most illuminating commentators were Joseph Kerman on the implications of the musical allegory, Kahler on the diabolic motifs from German legend, and Fergusson himself with a peroration that points up Mann's peculiar irony, the habit of having everything both ways. There may have been an extraneous irony, which seems to have gone unnoted by the seminars, in the fact that Mann and Eliot had both been dwelling and writing at Princeton shortly before.

There is a brief and tentative conclusion to Fitzgerald's book. The real conclusion, however, must be the long chain of sequels that by now have ex-

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tended these hearings into their 36th year. (Are they still held on Thursday evenings in the poetry room of the Firestone Library?) Fergusson and Blackmur, after their respective tours of duty, were followed by Joseph Frank and currently Victor Brombert, distinguished scholar-critics strongly oriented toward modern languages, comparative literature, and the history of ideas. Like their predecessors, they have been both pluralistic and ecumenical in inviting guests from the many mansions within the house of criticism. Literary studies, when they are institutionalized, all too frequently tend to contract and harden into self-promoting, contentious, and doctrinaire schools of thought. Doctrines, by definition, have something to teach. But more is to be learned from juxtaposing them critically—"so Truth be in the field"—than by imposing one doctrine or another, whether it be neo-Aristotelianism or Post-Structuralism. Princeton has thus done better than Chicago did, or than Yale has been doing, in living up to the title Fitzgerald has borrowed from Wallace Stevens: in recognizing change and seeking enlargement.

HARRY LEVIN

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INDIA INSIDE

In Custody
by Anita Desai

(Harper & Row, 204 pp., $16.95)

Ever since Kipling, and increasingly in recent years, India has had a literature that is not, in one important sense, Indian; that is to say, it is written in English. There have been the foreigners, those who have used their experience of living in India (sometimes quite briefly) as raw material: E. M. Forster, J. R. Ackerley, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Paul Scott, J. G. Farrell, M. M. Kaye. And there have been the Indians, whose writings have sometimes been called "Indo-British": Nirad Chaudhuri, G. V. Desani, R. K. Narayan, Salman Rushdie. These lists are simply of the most obvious names; they could be extended on both sides to include in the second group, for example, the interesting case of the short-story writer Vilas Sarang, who composes in his native Marathi and then translates himself into English.

Indian society, at many levels, is still one in which its own non-English literatures—and particularly poetry—are living things, quoted, responded to emotionally, revered as the product of skill and wisdom. Recitations, especially of traditional verse, draw in big audiences. Urdu, the court language of the ancient Muslim and Moghul rulers, enshrines the most revered literature of high seriousness. Hindi is more problematic, its old text archaic and obscure, its modern form often considered too humdrum for rich composition. Yet Urdu is inevitably identified with Islam, and therefore with Pakistan. All this is part of the language battle in India.

Anita Desai's background and upbringing might seem to detach her from such considerations. Her father was Bengali, her mother German, and her professional training and experience as a teacher have been in English. Her novels and her children's books are all written in English. And yet, whatever comparisons one makes between her work and that of such modern fiction writers as Paul Scott, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, or even Salman Rushdie, she is really closer to the heart of India than any of them—almost as close as Narayan. Scott was wholly an Englishman, who in his *Raj Quartet* put to good fictional use his wartime experience of India; Jhabvala is a Polish-German, educated in England, who married an Indian and absorbed much that is Indian, but now lives mainly in the United States; Rushdie was largely educated, at school and university, in England, and still lives there. But Anita Desai, for all her mixed background and her English-type education, is of another sort. She was educated in Delhi, lives in Bombay, and seems most at home in a milieu that, though cosmopolitan, is essentially Indian.

That "Indian-ness" is acutely captured in her novels, which are full of the crosscurrents and divided loyalties of contemporary Indian life. At the same time, Desai is a writer whose double vision takes in the "literariness" of that life—both the Indian (particularly Urdu) tradition and the English literary tradition, which has been, sometimes uneasily, grafted on to it, ever since Macaulay's famous (or notorious) "Minute on Education" in the 19th century. In *Fire on the Mountain* (1977), the old university vice chancellor's widow, Nanda Kaul, unaffectedly quotes Gerard Manley Hopkins; in *Clear Light of Day* (1980), Byron, Tennyson, Swinburne, Lawrence, and Eliot are all quoted by characters who, the next moment, and equally unaffectedly, recite lines from Iqbal, the great earlier 20th-century Urdu poet. And in her latest novel, *In Custody*, the baleful figure at the very center is himself an aged Urdu poet, the fictitious Nur, who, alongside his own work, intones "the greatest lines that were ever written by anyone"—lines from Keat's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci."

Anita Desai's direct use of literary references of this sort is a central part of her special gift, which is a compassionate tact in presenting people and situations poignantly, comically, and—part of both—as approximate simulacra of deflected hopes and unachieved strivings. Art is not life; some have thought art better than life; some have no time for art; but whatever the view, there is an unbridgeable gulf between the two. In Desai's fiction, it isn't so much a matter of Yeats's "perfection of the life, or of the work": people are almost bound to make a mess of both.

In Custody is set at a humbler level of Indian society than Desai has usually examined. Deven, the protagonist, is a low-grade lecturer in Hindi in a low-grade college in northern India. He once fancied himself as an Urdu poet, but has almost given that up ("I can write Urdu now only as my hobby"). Married, with a child, poverty-stricken, he is a man of crushed ambitions—until suddenly one day he bumps into Murad, an old friend from student days

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who turns out to be editor of what Deven takes to be a leading Urdu literary journal. Murad is a bluff blusterer who rouses all those crushed ambitions in Deven; he bamboozles him into taking on the task of interviewing possibly the greatest living Urdu poet, Nur, now old and ill and living in obscurity. The challenge is immense, but also immensely seductive. Money, significantly, isn't mentioned.

FROM THEN on, Deven is caught up in a hideous web of difficulties. Nur lives in Delhi, many miles from Deven's irredeemably provincial northern town of Mirpur. Just getting there is a problem. Then, when Nur is eventually tracked down, it is obvious that his great days are long over; he is not only old and ill, but a drunkard, pretty well penniless, surrounded by every type of sponger, scrounger, and sycophant, and living in what seems to be a brothel, quite possibly married to several of the inhabitants. He even manages to vomit in circumstances that make it necessary for poor Deven to clear up the results.

But Nur is important to Deven, not just because of Murad's commission and the presumed ensuing glory to Deven, but because art is important. The job must be done. Deven manages to wheedle out of his college's tiny Urdu department a grant for a tape recorder, so that the great man's utterances can be stored for posterity as well as used for Deven's immediate purposes. But the purchase turns out to be a second-hand machine that is, at the least, temperamental; the youth hired to operate it is incompetent; even when the machine works, Nur produces drunken ramblings or nothing at all—and, when he recites masterpieces, the recorder refuses to record. Meanwhile, Deven's wife grumbles and rails at him whenever he comes home. She has no time for Urdu poetastering; the family needs money.

So Deven has exchanged one kind of custody for another. He slides helplessly between an arranged and loveless marriage, a dreary and ill-regarded job, and the desperations of being tied to a defunct genius, a man whose apostolic touch was meant to bring Deven good fortune. Murad won't pay him, because he hasn't produced results; Sarla, his wife, doesn't want him, because he is a hopeless breadwinner and helpmeet; Nur rejects him, because he is an irritating encumbrance in the daily battle to get satisfaction out of the short span of life that is left.

Yet Deven emerges—without anything that could be called a happy ending—as a kind of hero, a hero of art. He may be a fool, but a sort of holy fool, someone who really supposes that the gifts of the spirit are more important than the gifts of the marketplace. Reviewers of Desai's earlier novels have written of her as Chekhovian, and one can see what they mean: the sad humor of provincial lives out on the edge of something. And yet there are many differences—differences quite crucially having to do with the fact that Desai's India is a more volatile and divided place than Chekhov's pre-revolutionary Russia, in its muddled but resiliently surviving democracy, in its enormous, literate but ill-paid clerisy (college teachers like Deven, literati like Murad, as well as vast numbers of lowly civil servants), and perhaps most of all in its religious divisions, which (as religious divisions so often do) have become political divisions.

Anita Desai manages to suggest all this without making it an overt theme. Her plotting is simple, even minimal: will Deven succeed in the task that has been set him? But she is such a consummate artist that she suggests, beyond the confines of the plot and the machinations of her characters, the immensities that lie beyond them—the immensities of India. She is in no way just local, or parochial, or provincial, partly because her India, in its large-scale tangled texture, can be seen as an image—with its own local colors, smells, babble of mingling and conflicting voices—of a much larger world. It is foreign views that tend to be partial and limited: Paul Scott's India, inevitably, is wholly Anglo-centric, and one in which the Indians are peripheral. Desai's, for all the cosmopolitan literary skill she brings to it, is an India that very few foreigners have ever penetrated: the India that is Indian.

ANTHONY THWAITE

Anthony Thwaite is co-editor of *Encounter*.

SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL

Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages by Jeffrey Burton Russell

(Cornell University Press, 384 pp., $24.95)

The Birth of Purgatory by Jacques LeGoff translated by Arthur Goldhammer

(University of Chicago Press, 430 pp., $25.00)

If, as Chesterton claimed, the devil's greatest triumph was convincing the modern world that he does not exist, Jeffrey Burton Russell means to rob him of his victory. *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages* is both a scholarly assessment of the development of diabology in the Middle Ages and an impassioned plea to the 20th century to recognize and acknowledge the existence of real, objective evil. The third in a series of works tracing the history of the devil from his Judeo-Christian roots, it represents a formidable undertaking: the devil's history is integrally related to the problem of evil, which is in turn at the heart of Western religious thought. Each of the volumes on Satan comprises, in essence, a judicious and able tour of Christian theology from the villain's point of view.

Lucifer is the best of Russell's volumes. In it for the first time he assesses in detail the manifestations of the devil outside learned theology, interspersing his chapters on the writings of Christian intellectuals with treatments of popular depictions in art and literature, and with the relation of the devil to social developments such as heresy and witchcraft.

Although far from clear and consis-

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tent, the prevailing position of the church on evil and the devil has been, at least since the time of Augustine, what is generally called "privation theory." Evil is not a force, but merely the absence of good; and the devil is not God's counterpart (as he would be in systems called "dualist," which assume counterpoised forces of good and evil), but simply a created being who has chosen the not-good over the good. The most common understanding of this choice is that it involved the devil's rebelling against his utter dependence on the God who created him, and asserting in some form (usually called "pride") the preeminence of his own importance. This was not-good. As a consequence of this sin, he was "cast down" from his place of glory; and he has ever since devoted himself to the destruction of other created beings by persuading them to choose the not-good as he did.

RUSSELL catalogs the development of this tradition with subtlety, and with meticulous scholarship. Although in the preceding volume of the series he had dismissed privation theory as "incoherent," here he presents it faithfully as a cogent and sophisticated response to the problems of evil and the devil, and he acknowledges that it is the definitive position of Christian theology on the subject. He does not, nonetheless, accept it; there is a profound and palpable tension throughout the work between the author's accurate recapitulation of orthodox views on the subject and his vehement personal objections to them. Clearly he cannot find in privation theory an explanation for the pitiful suffering of his fellow creatures or for the hideous moral evils of the world. Again and again, sometimes directly, often obliquely, he juxtaposes images of appallingly vicious and savage crimes (the rape and mutilation of children, Nazi genocide) with the bland tidiness of privation theory, suggesting both explicitly and implicitly that the latter can hardly account for the former.

The evocation of this tension would be altogether brilliant if it were entirely intentional. As it appears to be only partly deliberate, it is probably only partly brilliant; but it is certainly not least among the many merits of this work. Expressing in a work of scholarship one's personal dissatisfaction and unhappiness at the inability of the Western religious tradition to comfort victims of evil, or even to explain its meaning, is unusual, but it is extremely effective in this context. It conveys a sense of the substance, the poignance, and the importance of the subject.

TO A VERY large extent, the person and the theory of the devil is, in fact, the anguished response of Western culture to a problem of evil that theological explanations are probably inherently incapable of resolving satisfactorily. This is not to say that I agree, theologically, with Russell's criticisms of privation theory. As his own analysis demonstrates, it is the only possible approach for a non-dualist system that insists on the goodness of God. It is indeed counterintuitive that nothingness, or the mere absence of the good, can actively wreak destruction, cause hideous suffering, and affect so much of life so profoundly and palpably. Yet it is neither illogical nor contrary to experience. Russell himself cites a vacuum as a point of comparison, but cold is a more intuitive and forceful metaphor. Cold is simply the absence of heat: it is nothing. Yet this nothing can be felt, can wreak vast and terrible destruction, can cause ghastly suffering. It is no accident that Dante's Satan is a frozen figure, locked immobile in the center of a dark, cold hell rather than soaring about a burning, light-filled inferno, as the popular imagination would have it. Dante was a theologian. He knew that the devil could not be a vibrant force with a counter-energy of his own; he must be, rather, a cold and enervated figure, having rejected the source of energy in favor of nothingness.

The image is powerful and subtle in Dante, but in the minds of most people it does not work well. Is it the mere absence of good that causes children to starve to death by the thousands in Ethiopia? Do mass murderers simply choose the "non-good"? "Nothingness" hardly seems an adequate or satisfying explanation either for the "ills" of the world or for the moral evil most Christians sense in themselves and others. "The devil made me do it" comes closer to expressing the experience of temptation than "I chose the non-good." This is, in my judgment, the power of the devil, and although he does not assess it as clearly as one might wish, Russell provides a wealth of documentation on the extent to which the devil is simply the projection onto a living being of our fears and hostilities about the universe, our neighbors and ourselves—a kind of species portrait of Dorian Gray.

This is not to suggest that later generations of Christians invented the devil to fill a psychological need. No matter how much he may embarrass modern Christians, the devil was indisputably real to Jesus and the early church. He is as much a part of revelation as the church itself. But his role in the economy of salvation—beyond that of the tempter—is minimal or, at most, ambiguous. The logic of privation theory leaves him scant importance. He has loomed so large in the Western imagination not because he is so crucial to Christian theology, then, but because he is so needed by Christian people, as a way of expressing just barely within the limits of orthodoxy the real power that the absence of good can have.

Because the evil of human nature is, Dorothy L. Sayers wrote, "at all times rooted in its good, and [its] good can only redeem, but not abolish, its evil," it would be dangerous to direct loathing for evil at other humans. The devil offers a focal point for such feelings. Russell makes this point eloquently:

> as the Devil has faded in recent centuries, the projection of evil upon others has increased. If we have no Lucifer on which to project our shadow, we choose Jews, capitalists, Catholics, communists, Russians, Arabs, blacks. . . . Both the image of the Devil and the demonization of minorities seem to draw upon a sink of idiotic cruelty within ourselves.

This is a sensitive observation, but put this way it obscures the very truth it

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"ONE LONGS for an occasional unguarded burst of irrepressible patriotism in the *Times* editorial column. It never comes. Instead one encounters the same old pseudojudicious moralistic drone over 'our' sins and simplicities, leavened by sporadic ridicule of 'evil empire.' But the first-person pronoun is fake: The 'we' is really 'they' or 'you'—the voice of detraction (as C.S. Lewis put it) masquerading as the virtue of contrition."

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might have conveyed. Minorities were by no means better off when Satan exercized greater control over the popular imagination. Indeed, as *Lucifer* eloquently documents, the devil was often given the attributes of minorities (e.g., blackness), who then seemed even more threatening because they were "diabolical." It can hardly be argued that the position of Jews, for example, is worse in America because consciousness of Satan has declined.

The tendency to project evil seems to me an ineradicable part of human nature's good as well as its bad. Projecting greed as the predominant character of Jews, or promiscuity of gay people, or laziness of blacks, or sorcery of ugly women, has always been harmful for both subject and object. Projecting fear of the dizzying pace of scientific discovery or the unknown elements of the universe onto modern demons such as Frankenstein's creature or Alien does not seem to me particularly bad. And demonizing Nazis or mass murderers could even be healthy; it enables one to view the evil in human souls and societies with horror and disgust without attaching those damaging emotions to specific, vulnerable individuals, who doubtless have some good in them as well as evil. Whole generations of Europeans and Americans have grown up associating the kind of absolute, palpable demonic evil once called Satan or Lucifer—and which often spilled over onto women or heretics or Jews—with genocide, anti-Semitism, and the excesses of aggressive nationalism now synonymous with Nazism. Satan has not so much disappeared as metamorphosed into a more recognizable and modern metaphor of our sins. Hitler is for the modern, secular world what Satan was to the Middle Ages or to Milton—the embodiment of human folly and wickedness, a mirror of the dark side of the soul, beguiling and repulsive (as evil is), and one of the most irresistible plot devices of all time.

SOMETHING in the human soul is drawn to evil—whether it is nothing or something. Russell fails to note two particular strengths of privation theory: first, that it explains the ineradicability of evil (there is nothing to eradicate: it is simply a potential built into the system); and second, that it reduces evil to existential triviality and robs it of importance. It is an irony that, like most of the Christian literature on which it draws, Russell's fine book, in trying to warn us about the menace of Satan, both condemns and glorifies him.

To some degree this is simply the effect of Russell's luminous prose; Satan basks in the reflected glow of splendid writing. The language and structure of *Lucifer* are elegant, concise, lively, and moving. Phrases like "widespread starvation in a world of riches . . . pulverized the assumptions of secular progressivism" haunt the reader and establish a visceral underlying pathos against which the more abstract considerations of the book stand out in bright relief. *Lucifer* is a pleasure to read.

THIS contrasts unhappily with the style of the otherwise fascinating *Birth of Purgatory* by Jacques LeGoff, in which mounds of needless words blot up meaning and in which the chatty looseness of structure leaves the impression of an unprepared, stream-of-consciousness lecture. As *Lucifer* conveys the psychological utility of the concept of Satan by enabling us to feel the urgency and anguish of the problem of evil, *Purgatory* unintentionally, I fear, conveys to us the tedium of temporal satisfaction for sins by making us slog slowly and painfully through time without benefit of labor-saving or time-condensing analysis on the part of the author. The book's "structure" is simply a repetition or summary, in chronological order, of every anecdote or statement that is in some way relevant to the theme, sometimes followed by an assessment. This trudge is accompanied by a running commentary of stunning superfluity about precisely what the author has just done, is now doing, and is about to do at every moment: "I shall presently discuss a text attributed to Peter Damian, who died in 1072, and another attributed to Saint Bernard," and so on. This is, I know, a fashionable mode of historical discourse, especially in Europe, but I cannot reconcile myself to it. Life on earth is too short to spend time reading that the subject at hand "should neither be exaggerated nor minimized" or to be patient with patronizing vacuity like "Let me be clear about my meaning" (was I the one preventing this?). The general flabbiness and lack of reflection of the work are a shame, because it is in other ways an extremely important treatment of a fundamental and largely unstudied aspect of Western eschatology and the popular imagination.

Notions of the afterlife in most religious traditions—including Roman Catholicism before the 12th century and other branches of Christianity still—have been dual: some happiness or reward (frequently associated with light) for the good; suffering (frequently associated with dark) for the bad. The locales for these poles have varied widely. The afterlife was fundamental to early Christianity ("If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. 15.19), but Christians were at first rather vague about the nature of both heaven and hell, often conflating Jewish, Roman and (later) Germanic notions with Christian teaching on the subject. (Christian revelation itself is meager, for example, compared to that of the Koran, which specifies what the saved will eat, drink and wear—down to the color of brocade—in paradise, and names the plant that constitutes the major diet in hell.)

AFTER nearly a millennium of fairly consistent but vague speculations and visions of heaven and hell, European Christian culture suddenly articulated in the 12th century a specific and rather startling geography of the afterlife. The traditional binary division was modified into a ternary one: the truly bad go to hell; the truly good go to heaven; and those who are basically good but have sinned in life are "purged" of their sins in purgatory, after which they enter heaven. This doctrine was not clearly present in the Catholic tradition before the 12th century, and was a major feature of Catholic eschatology from the 13th century on. Its sudden appearance is mysterious and significant, and LeGoff might have offered an explanation for it.

He does not. He traces as "antecedents" of the idea of purgatory such related phenomena as visions of hell, that resemble later visions of purgatory, and hints in theological and liturgical sources of a belief in the efficacy of prayers for the dead (significant in his view because they imply a conviction that their fate was not irrevocably sealed when their souls left their bodies). But when he comes to the crucial 12th and 13th centuries he suddenly shifts the focus away from general eschatological issues to much more specific concerns, such as the decade (1170-1180) of the first use in Latin sources of the word *purgatorium*. Not only is this arguable—*in purgatorio* is as apt to be

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ellipsis for the common expression *in igne purgatorio* as *in purgatoriis* (which antedates the "emergence" of purgatory in his view) is for *in poenis purgatoriis*—but, more seriously, it diverts onto a red herring attention owed the more important question of how and why the idea of purgatory obtained with such startling ease and rapidity a permanent hold on the spiritual life of most Christians, a hold certainly more related to personal spiritual needs (and to Dante's imagination) than to the noun employed by theologians in scholastic tracts.

As an explanation of the popularity of purgatory LeGoff suggests only a relation to subtle intellectual changes, such as increasing emphasis on ternary rather than binary structure, and the preeminence in the 12th century of notions of justice. These explanations seem inadequate. The system was not really ternary at all; the whole point about purgatory was that it was a means for ordinary, nonsaintly people to be on the plus side of the positive-negative division. They were saved. Prayers for them before the rise of purgatory might have been for their salvation; afterward they were simply to hasten a happy fate already assured them and to reduce their temporary suffering. Purgatory in fact eliminated a vaguely ternary aspect in previous theology by making absolutely clear that every soul's fate *was* sealed from the moment of death, although for some salvation followed on a period of purgation.

WHAT then might account for the sudden triumph of purgatory? A central function of many religions is to comfort the bereaved with ceremonies or assurances about the happy prospects of the dead. Christianity began on a triumphant note in this regard by asserting more positively than any other major religion that the dead would be raised—bodily—and would live in glory in heaven with Christ. Their ability to do so was consequent upon Christ's conquest of death through his resurrection, and upon his conquest of sin through baptism, which he left to his followers. But what happened if people committed sins after baptism? Could they still go to heaven? Constantine was so unsure that he declined to be baptized until the last moment of his life, and kept clerics with him at all times in case he should need to be baptized. As Christianity also became increasingly ascetic, and the list of infractions one might commit grew longer and more detailed, the problem grew more and more acute.

DURING the early Middle Ages the practice of confessing one's sins—first to the congregation, then to a priest in private—gradually became common throughout Europe and was associated with the assignment of "penances" for sins. The penance—a fine, prayers, pilgrimage, a spiritual duty of some sort—was to make "satisfaction" for the sin. To whom this satisfaction was made, and why, remained exquisitely ambiguous until the 12th century, when Anselm and others popularized the idea that God neither needs nor exacts "amends"; He has established an abstract justice that He scrupulously observes. It was to satisfy the demands of this justice that Jesus sacrificed himself, and it is the same justice that must be "satisfied" through penance by humans who have sinned, no matter how willing God is to forgive them and welcome them into his kingdom. But what of those who die before such satisfaction is complete? Experience apparently convinced most Europeans that many died within such close proximity to sin, or with such an accumulated weight of small failings, that they could not have made up for them before death.

Both the logical and the psychologically satisfying answer to this problem is that there is still some opportunity to make satisfaction after death. For the scholastics this was more a rationalization of the theory of penance (only made universal at the opening of the 13th century) than an elaboration of the geography of the afterlife. For the average person, however, purgatory filled an urgent personal need to believe that loved ones, despite their obvious failings, had found a happy resting place. To believe that after his sudden death Uncle Joe was simply received into heaven, despite his philandering and other failings, would not only diminish the reward of heaven and encourage sin—anyone can get in, so why bother to be good?—but would undermine the general understanding of God's perfect justice at all levels of Christian experience.

On the other hand, what comfort would be offered in a religion that suggested that for any sin not properly amended a beloved relative would spend eternity in hell? Kindly old Uncle Joe, who was always good to me? Just because he didn't have time to make up that one indiscretion? Most likely purgatory became doctrine in the 13th century because (1) the doctrine of penance, fully incorporated into theology for the first time in the 11th and 12th centuries, required it; and (2) once this teaching was established, purgatory fulfilled a need fundamental to any religious system concerned with the afterlife: a fair but flexible way of relating rewards and punishments to the unconditional love of the living for the deceased.

IN SOME ways *Lucifer* and *The Birth of Purgatory* reveal opposing trends in Christian thought—in the former a tendency to externalize evil as "other," in the latter an effort to recognize that there is some evil in all of us that must be provided for eschatologically. But both of them also address one of the least understood and most interesting aspects of Catholicism, one that is particularly critical at this juncture of history, and that is the extent to which the intellectual and spiritual and psychological needs of the laity do, can, and should constitute doctrine. This question arises not only in the overt struggle in the United States between some bishops and prominent laypersons over abortion and other issues, but more subtley in many broader contexts. What does it mean, for example, that most American and European Catholic couples consider artificial contraception morally acceptable, while the Vatican and some of the hierarchy continue to maintain that it is a serious sin? A standard definition of Catholic orthodoxy has always been "what is taught and believed by the whole church." But who is to prevail when different levels of the church hold widely divergent, even directly opposed, views in the matter?

The person of Satan and the doctrine of purgatory represent two effective (though not perfect) compromises in this context. In general the church has allowed the mass of Christians to personify evil in Satan as an active force, and even to think in terms ("The devil made me do it. . . ," "The forces of evil triumphed . . .") that may be technically heretical, because this enables them to conceptualize evil in a productive way without diminishing the power and the authority of the Christian God as much as an alternative understand-

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ing would—a policy, in other words, of benign neglect, accentuated by occasional intervention to correct egregious misprisions or restrain serious deformations of theology. Christian diabology is largely a popular idea bounded at the edges by a theological logic. In the case of purgatory the church took a more active role, and deployed the logic of theology to build into doctrine a psychologically helpful and coherent approach to a human quandary about justice, hope, love, and the afterlife.

It has long been the contention of those outside the Western religious traditions (and the worry of some within) that they are "opiates" designed to fill the psychological needs of the simple, and at the scholarly level there has been a tendency to ignore popular feelings and spirituality and their impact on religious culture and institutions. This disregard has been in some cases total, as when scholars treat the history of Christianity as a matter of intellectual history comprising the learned writings of a tiny elite (probably not even known to, much less understood by, 99 percent of the faithful). In other cases the disregard has been only partial, as when modern scholars divide religion into two components, one labeled "popular" and the other "theological" or "institutional." The latter approach is in some ways even more misleading than the former, since it implies that the two operate as separate entities, theology being the intellectual component of the Western tradition and "popular religion" making up an inert, mindless substratum on or against which theology acts with some difficulty. Both are misprisions. It is at once the peculiar genius of Catholicism and one of its most pressing (and unresolved) problems that the religion of the majority—however ill-educated or unsophisticated—not only is, but is *supposed to be*, the essence of religion. Their feelings about evil, their aspirations for the dead, their attitudes to morality are not simply the formless matter to be shaped and directed by the learned elite. They are part of the substance of Catholic doctrine, according to that very doctrine.

Although *Lucifer* is easier to read—partly because the subject is more dramatic and compelling—both Russell and LeGoff have helped to construct the foundations for a more realistic understanding of Christianity as the organic interaction (rather than the parallel evolution) of a hierarchical intellectual tradition and the beliefs and spiritual values of the majority of ordinary Christians. This is a breakthrough.

JOHN BOSWELL

John Boswell is the author, most recently, of *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality* (University of Chicago).

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

However, it is obvious from the ironic tone of Dr. Nuckolls's remarks, as quoted in our article, that he is not a LaRouchian.

OPERATION MOSES

To the editors:

As one who has visited the Ethiopian Jews in the remote mountains of Gondar and closely studied their absorption in Israel, I must say that Leon Wieseltier has got it exactly right in his excellent article ("Brothers and Keepers," TNR, February 11). The uncompleted rescue of Ethiopian Jewry reveals a historic and moving story that we are only beginning to understand.

Israeli officials who have been involved in recent years in the rescue program have been compelled to accept verbal abuse mutely. The governing junta of Ethiopia will continue to manipulate the refugee exodus and famine relief to save its own neck. Within the past few weeks, I have seen in the Immigrant Absorption Center in Tiberias a spontaneous outpouring by Israelis of gifts of clothing and toys to welcome newly arrived Ethiopian Jews. This signaled to me the fulfillment of the last words I heard from a dignified patriarch as he showed me the rudimentary synagogue in a remote village in Gondar just three years ago. In simple but eloquent Hebrew, he said: "Do not forget us. You are our hope [*hatikvah shelanu*] for the future."

JOEL J. SPRAGREZEZ
Chicago, Illinois

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TRB, *from page 4*

like such a cruel joke. Let's call the theoretical debate a draw.

As a practical matter, though, who is actually going to be denied the opportunity to attend the college of her choice because of Reagan's rules? Only about ten percent of the four and a half million student aid recipients get more than the proposed $4,000 ceiling now, and most get just a few hundred dollars more. All families are entitled to $4,000 in government-guaranteed but unsubsidized loans on top of any other aid. Part-time and summer jobs, even at the minimum wage, can bring in another $4,200, for a total of $12,200. The average private college costs $10,000. Some top schools cost $15,000, but these are also the ones with the most generous scholarship programs of their own. By the same calculation, students from $32,500-plus families start out with $8,200 a year before their families or colleges need to cough up a penny.

Under these rules, many students and families will end up saddled with huge debts. Many may decide that the financial burden of attending a private college isn't worth it. But very few will be unable to swing it if they really think it's worthwhile. And once the question is seen as the burden, rather than the opportunity itself, it becomes a distributional issue. True, $32,500 a year isn't rich. But it's 130 percent of the median income. Why should the average taxpayer, including the college-age guy who's already working, finance an above-average-income student on his way to becoming even more above-average?

So the Reaganites are right about this one. It's time that student aid programs were trimmed back. But keep in mind that if it had been up to conservatives, there would be no student aid programs at all. *Now* they say that society should guarantee everyone the opportunity for a decent higher education, just as *now* they say that the government should prevent, not promote, racial discrimination. In both cases, this is a response to developments that went "too far" in their opinion, and they may even be right. But when it counted, before these principles were established, conservatives thought the principles themselves went "too far." If liberals are smart, they will let the conservatives trim back some over-luxuriant growths. After they do the groundwork, it will be time to plant anew.

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